

Apples of Gold

FOR
Young men and Women,
AND

CROWN of GLORY for
Old Men and Women.

OR,

the Happiness of being good betimes, And
the honour of being an Old Disciple.
early and fully discovered, and closely
and faithfully applyed.

ALSO

The Young mans Objections answered,
And the Old Mans Doubts resolved.

THOMAS BROOKS heretofore Preacher of
the Gospel at St. Margarets New Fish Street-hill.

The last Edition.

I thy Servant fear the Lord from my youth, 1 King.
8. 12.
A hoary Head is a crown of Glory; if it be found in
the way of Righteousness, Prov. 16. 31.

Now, Printed by W. R. for J. Harcourt, to be sold at
his Shop over-against Gresham-Colledge in Bishop-
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Richard Moray
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Joseph Redding
his Book & Legacy
given by Alexander
Bossell October 4
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John Collins
his Book given
as a Legacy by
Hously Jun 13, 1700



T O

All Young Persons
throughout the Nations,
especially those of (both
Sexes) who begin to turn
their faces towards

Z I O N:

Dear ~~Hearts~~,
 Word spoken in due season, how

good is it? it is often like
Apples of Gold in Pictures
of Silver; many times such a
word is sweet, precious, pleasing and de-
lectable, and strong in its operation.

A company of near friends Dining
together one Sabbath day, one that was
at Table (to prevent impertinent dis-
course) said, that it was a question whe-
ther they should all go to Heaven or no,

circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the
wheels upon which our words and speeches should run.
Such a word is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver.

Pro. 15. 2

25. 10. 1

A word
spoken
(gnaloph-
nau) upon
his wheels
that is,
with a due
concur-
rence, and
observa-
tion of al

The Epistle

which struck them all into a dunn, and caused every one to enter into a serious consideration with themselves, one thought if any of this company go to Hell it must be I, & so thought another & another, & indeed, so thought almost every one then present, as well servants but waited, as those that sate at the table, as it was afterward acknowledged. & (through the mercy & blessing of God) this speech so wrought upon the spirits of most of them, that it proved the first instrumental means of their conversion.

I have my hopes through grace, that this Treatise, though it be so in weakness, yet by the blessing of the most High upon it, it may rise in power, and be an instrumental means of the winning of souls to Christ, which is my highest ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnal reasonings, that might otherwise have stifled this Babe in the Womb, and kept it from ever seeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperor, that delighted in no undertakings so much, as those which in the esteem of his Councellors and Captains were deemed most difficult.

Dedicatory.

difficult and impossible, if they said such or such an enterprize would never be accomplished; it was Argument enough to him, to make the adventure, & he usually prospered, he seldom miscarried.

I have never found greater & choicer blessings to attend any of my poor weak labours, than those that have been brought forth into the world through the greatest straits and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus reports, that one telling a Souldier, going to war against the Persians, that they would hide the Sun with their Arrows, he answered, we shall fight best in the shade; nothing should discourage nor dishearten a souldier of Christ, 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. Christ saith to all his souldiers (as the black Prince, his father said to him fighting as it were in blood to the knees, and in great distress) either vanquish or dye. Men of no resolution, or of weak resolution, will be but little serviceable to the good of souls; such watch-men as will be free from the blood of souls, and be serviceable to the interest of Christ in turning sinners from darkness to light, must be men of spirit and resolution.

Valerius
Maximus
lib. 3. c. de
Fiducia

Hist. of
France, p.
196.

The Epistle

August. de
tempore
Serm. 256

I remember St. Austin beginneth one of his Sermons thus (Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes flos ætatis, periculum mentis) To you is my speech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.

So say I, to you, O young men, do I dedicate the ensuing Treatise & that first because the matter contained therein doth primarily and eminently concern you.

And secondly, Because of an earnest desire that I have of your internal and eternal well-fare.

And thirdly, because there is most hope of doing good among you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatise.)

And fourthly, To countermine the great underminer of your souls, whose great design is to poyson you, and to posses you in the morning of your days.

Fifthly, to provoke others that are more able and worthy to be more serviceable to you in declaring themselves, fully on this very subject; which none yet have done that I know of, though it be a point of as great concernment to young persons (especially) as any I know in all the Scriptures

Sixthly, and lastly, because there are very

Dedictory.

very many that do lye in wait to deceive, corrupt and poyson, your persons, with God-dishonouring, Christ-denying, Conscience-wasting, and soul-damning opinions, principles, and blasphemies.

I have read of one who boasted & gloried in this, that he had spent thirty years in corrupting and poysoning of youth; doubtless, many wretches, many Monsters, there be amongst us, who make it their business, their glory, their all to delude & draw young persons to those dangerous errors, and blasphemies that lead to destruction. Error and folly (saith one very well) be the knots of Satan, wherewith he ties Children to the stake to be burnt in Hell.

There is a truth in what the Tragædian said long since (*Venenum in auro bibitur*) poyson is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold; So is an error or by-notion soonest taken into the judgment & conscience from persons of the fairest carriage, and smoothest conversations. Error is so foul an Hagg, that if it should come in its own shape, a man would leath it, and fly from it, as from Hell.

If Jezabel had not painted her face,

Eph 4. 14.
A blind eye is worse than a lame foot, he that had the Leprosie in his head, was to be pronounced utterly unclean.

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she had not gotten so many young dotting Adulterers to have followed her to their own ruine.

Ah! Young men, young men, the blessing of the Lord upon your serious and diligent perusal of this Treatise may be a happy means to preserve you from being ensnared and deluded by those Monsters, who compass Sea and Land to make Profelites for Hell.

Mat. 23. 15

And thus I have given you the reasons of my dedicating this Treatise to the service of your souls, I would willingly presume that it will be as kindly taken, as it is cordially tendred; I hope none of you into whose hands it may fall, will say as once Antipater K. of Macedonia did, when one presented him with a Book treating of happiness, his answer was (Ou Sholazo) I have no leisure.

Ah! Young men & women, young men and virgins, as you tender the everl. st- ing welfare of your souls, as you would escape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would have an interest in Christ, a pardon in your bosoms, as you would be blessed here, and glorious hereafter find time, find leisure to read over and over

the

Dedicatory.

the following Treatise which is purposely calculated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects, to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives that hath prevailed with me to appear once more in Print, which are these:

First having preached a Sermon occasionally upon these words (on which this following discourse is built) I was earnestly impurged to Print the Sermon, by some worthy friends, I did as long as in modesty I could, withstand their desires, judging it not worthy of them) but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings & workings in of God were such, as hath occasioned that one Sermon to multiply into many. Luther tells us, that when he first began to turn his back upon Popery, he intended no more, but to withstand Popish Pardons, & selling Indulgences; yet neither would God or his enemies let him alone, till he resolved with Moses, not to leave a hoof of Popery unopposed, &c. God many times in the things of the Gospel, carries forth his servants beyond their intentions, beyond their resolutions. But, Sec.

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Secondly, the kind acceptance and good quarter that my other pieces have found in the world, and those signal and multiplied blessings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Christ, and to the building up of others in Christ hath encouraged me to present this Treatise to the world, hoping that the Lord hath a blessing in store for this also.

Thirdly, that I might in some measure make up others neglects, whose Age, whose Parts, whose Experiences, whose Graces hath long called upon them to do something considerable in this way, and that they may be provoked by my weak essay to do better, and to make up what is wanting through my invincible infirmities, and spiritual wants and weakneses, which are so many, as may well make a sufficient Apology for all the defects and weakneses that in this Treatise shall appear to a serious judicious eye. But

Fourthly, The love of Christ and souls hath constrained me to it; as there is an attractive, so there is a compulsive virtue in Divine love. Love to Christ

2 Cor. 5. 14
2 Cor. 12.
15.

Dedicatory.

Christ and souls, will make a man willing to spend and be spent; he that prays himself to death, that preaches himself to death, that studies himself to death, that sweats himself to death, for the honour of Christ, and good of souls, shall be no looser in the end: Divine love is like a Rod of Myrtle, which, as Pliny reports, makes the Traveller that carries it in his hand, that he shall never be faint nor weary: Divine Love is very operative, (si non operatur, non est) if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all. Divine Love, like fire, is not idle, but active, he that loves cannot be barren; love will make the soul constant, and abundant in well-doing. God admits none to Heaven (saith Justin Martyr) but such as can perswade him by their works, that they love him. The very Heathen hath observed, that God doth not love his children with a weak womanish affection, but with a strong masculine love; and certainly, they that love the Lord strongly, that love him with a masculine love, they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But.

Fifthly,

Solus amor
nescit diffi-
cultates,
Love
knows no
difficulties

Seneca.

The Epistle

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But. Fifthly,

Solus amor
nescit diffi-
cultates,
Love
knows no
difficulties

Seneca.

The Epistle

It is said
of *Marcellus*
the
Roman
General,
that he
could not
be quiet,
*Nec victor,
nec victus,*
neither
Conque-
red, nor
Conque-
rour; Such
a one is
Satan.

Fifthly, I observe that Satan & his instruments are exceeding busie and unwearied in their designs, attempts and endeavours, in these days, to corrupt, and posses, to defile and destroy, all the young, the tender, the most precious and most flourishing plants among us.

Latimer told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn diligence and vigilance of the Prophets and Apostles, they should learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Diocess, and discovers by an untired power, seeking whom he may destroy; when the Wolves are abroad, the Shepherd should not sleep, but watch, yea, double his watch, remembering that he were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one soul upon him, by his negligence, or otherwise.

Satan is a Lyon, not a Lamb, a roaring Lyon, not a sleepy Lyon, not a Lyon standing still, but a Lyon going up and down, as not being contented with the prey, the many millions of souls he hath got, he seeks whom he may sip up at draught, as that word (*νεκτοειν*) in the 1 Pet. 3. 8. imports, his greatest design.

Dedica

his design, is to fill Hell with souls, which should awaken every one to be active, and to do all that may be done to prevent his design, and help forward the salvation of souls.

St. Chrysostom compares good Pastors to Fountains that ever send forth waters, or Conduits that are always running, though no Pail be put under. But,

Sixthly and lastly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in, and the more work any man doth for a Christ on earth, the better pay he shall have when he comes to Heaven. Every man shall at the last reap as he sows; Opportunities of doing service for Christ, and souls are more worth than a world; therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how soon I may put off this earthly tabernacle, and remembering that as there is no believing, nor repenting in the Grave, so there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor printing in the Grave, we had need to be up and doing, to put both hands to it, and to do all we do with all our might, knowing, that the night draws on upon us, where-

Chrys. in
Mat. Ho.
15.

1 Cor. 15.
ult.

2 Cor. 9. 6

2 Pet. I. 13
14.

Eccl. 9. 10.

Joh. 9. 4.

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wherein no man can work.

A Christians dying day, is the Lords pay day, that is a time to receive wages, not to do work. And thus I have given the world a true account of the Reasons that moved me to Print the following discourse.

There are many things in this Treatise that are of use to all, and several things of moment, that are not every day preached nor read; I have made it as pleasurable as time would permit, that so it might be the more profitable to the Reader, & that I might the better teach the young man by (a holy) craft, which is a high point of Heavenly wisdom, there being no wisdom to that of winning of souls. I shall now follow this piece with my weak prayers, that it may be so blest from Heaven, as that it may bring in some, and build up others, and do good to all; And so rest,

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel
of Christ,

THOMAS BROOK

TH

1 Cor. 12.

ch. 15. 2.

Pro. 11. 30



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T H E
 Young-mans Duty
 A N D
 EXCELLENCY.

I KING. 14. ch. 13. v.

And all Israel shall mourn for him, and Bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the Grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, in his house of Jeroboam.



SHALL onely stand upon the latter part of this Verse, because that affords me matter most suitable to my design.

—Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijah's* life, in him we find some good thing towards the Lord, &c. When *Abijah* was Child, *verse 3. 12.* when he was his young and tender years, he had the seeds of grace in him, he had the Image of God upon him, could discern between good and evil, and he did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (*Nagna*) translated Child, *verse 3.* is very often applyed to such as we call Youths, or young men, *Exod. 24. Numb. 6. 11. 1 Sam. 3. 17. &c.*

Of such age and prudence was *Abijah*, as that he could choose good and refuse evil, was a Lot in Sodom, he was good among the bad, the beauty and frame of his heart was towards that which was good, which the heart both of his Father and

נער
is used for
a young
man or
stripling,
Gen. 22. 5.
and often
for a ser-
vant,
though he
be a man
of ripe
years, *Ecc. 1. 3.* Such
as one E-
vangelist
calleth
young
men, *Luke 12. 45.* another cal-
leth fel-
low-ser-
vants, *Mat. 24. 49.*

Mother was set upon evil.

Abijah began to be good betimes, he crost that pestilent Proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devil. 'Tis the Glory and Goodness of God, that he will take notice of the least good that is in any of his. 1 Pet. 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarah's* speech to *Abraham*, and that was this she called him *Lord*, and this God mentions for her honour and commendation, *she called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one shining Pearl, than upon an heap of rubbish. God finds a Pearl in *Abijah*, and he puts it into his Crown, to his eternal commendation. *There was found in him some good thing towards the Lord, &c.* For the words.

1, *There was found in him*, The Hebrew word *Matsa*, sometimes signifies, finding without seeking, Isa. 65: 1. *I am found of them that sought me not*: so Psal. 116. verse 3. *The sorrows of Death compassed me*,

and the pains of hell got hold upon me. I found trouble and sorrow. I found trouble which I look'd not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it. There's an elegance in the Original. The pains of Hell gat hold upon me; So we read, but the Hebrew is, The pains of Hell found me (one word signifies both) they found me, we did not find them. *There was found in Abijah some good thing towards the Lord, i.e.* there was found in him without searching or seeking, some good thing towards the Lord. It was plain and visible enough for men might see and observe it without enquiring, or seeking, they might run and read some good thing in him towards the Lord. and

Secondly, The word sometimes signifies, finding by seeking, or inquiry, *Isa. 55. 6. Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, &c.* So upon search and inquiry, there was found in *Abijah*, (though young) some good thing towards the Lord.

Thirdly

Thirdly, sometimes the Word
 notes the obti ning of that which
 is sufficient, *Josh. 7. 16. Numb.*
11. 22. Judg. 21. 14. in *Abijah* there
 was that good in him towards the
 Lord, that was sufficient to evi-
 dence the work of grace upon him,
 sufficient to satisfie himself and o-
 thers, of the goodness and happi-
 ness of this condition; though he
 dyed in the prime, and flower of
 his days, &c.

And in him was found some good
 thing; The Hebrew word (*Tob*)
 that is here rendred good, signi-
 fies,

First, That which is right and
 just, *2 Sam. 15. 3.* See thy mat-
 ters are good and right, i. e. just
 and right.

Secondly, That which is profi-
 table, *Dent. 6. 11. Houses full of all*
good things, i. e. houses full of all
 & profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleasing,
2 Sam. 19. 27. Do what is good in
thine eyes, i. e. do what is pleasing
 in thine eyes.

Fourthly, that which is full, and compleat, *Gen. 15. 15. Thou shalt be buryed in a good old age, i. e. thou shalt be buryed when thine age is full and compleat.*

Fifthly, That which is joyful and delightful, *1 Sam. 25. 8. We come in a good day, i. e. we come in a joyful and delightful day, now put altogether, and you may see that there was found in Abijah, when he was young, that which was right and just, that which was pleasing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.*

In the words you have two things that are most considerable.

First, That this Young mans goodness was towards the Lord God of *Israel*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who yet are bad, yea, very bad towards God. Some there are, who are very kind to the creature, and yet very unkind to their Creator; many mens goodness

This age
affords
many such
Hypocrites
such Mon-
sters, &c.

ness towards the creature, is like the rising Sun, but their goodness towards the Lord, is like a morning Cloud, or as the early dew, which is soon dried up by the Sun-Beams; but *Abijah's* goodness was towards the Lord, his goodness faced the Lord, it looked towards the glory of God. Two things make a good Christian, good actions, and good aims; and though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzza*) yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, (as in *Jehu*) whose justice was approved, but his policy punished; the first Chapter of *Hosea*, and the fourth Verse; doubtless *Abijah's* actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodness was towards the Lord.

It's recorded of the *Catanenses*, that they made a stately Monument of Kingly Magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons, who took their aged Parents upon
B 5 their

Hof. 6. 4.

There may be *Malum opus in bona materia* as in *Je-*
hu's zeal.

their backs, and carryed them through the fire, when their Fathers house was all in a flame; these Young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijah's goodness towards the Lord*? &c. A man cannot be good towards the Lord, but he will be good towards others; but a man may be good towards others, that is not good towards the Lord: Oh that mens practise did not give too loud a Testimony every day to this assertion &c.

Happy are those souls that with the Sturgeon or Crab-fish can swim against the stream of custom & example, and that with *Atticus*, can cleave to the right, though losing side.

Secondly, He was good among the bad, *He was good in the house of Jeroboam*; 'Tis in fashion to see (at least) to be good among good, but to be really good among those that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not only truth of goodness, but a great degree of goodness; this young man was good, *in the house of Jeroboam whomade all Israel to sin*, who was very naughty; who was stark naughty: and

Altho

Abijah, as the Fishes which live in the salt-Sea are fresh ; so though he lived in a (sink) a Sea of wickedness, yet he retained his *Goodness* towards the Lord.

They say, Roses grow the sweeter, when they are planted by Garlick : they are sweet and rare Christians indeed, who hold their goodness, and grow in goodness, where wickedness sits on the Throne ; and such a one the young man in the Text was.

To be Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaff, Pearls among Cockles, and Roses among Thorns, is excellent.

To be a *Jonathan* in *Saul's* Court, to be an *Obadiah* in *Ahab's* Court, to be an *Abedmelech* in *Zedechiah's* Court, and to be an *Abijah* in *Jeroboam's* Court, is a wonder a miracle.

To be a *Lot* in *Sodom*, to be an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to be a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to be a *Nehemiah* in *Tamasco*, and to be a *Job* in the Land of *Husse*, is to be a Saint among

mong Devils, and such a one the man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm, that *Venus* never appeared so beautilous, as when she sate by black *Vulcan's* side. Gracious souls shine most clear, when they be set by black conditioned persons; *Stephen's* face never shin'd so Angelically, so gloriously (in the Church) where all were vertuous, as before the Council, where all were vicious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a shining Sun in *Jeroboam's* Court which for prophaness and wickedness, was a very Hell.

The words which I have chosen to insist upon, afford us several Observations, but I shall only name one, which I intend to prosecute at this time, and that is this, viz.

CHAP. I.

Deft.

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes.

Other

Other Scriptures speak out this to be a truth, besides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the second of *Chronicles*, chapter 34. 1, 2, 3 Verses. *Josiah* was eight years old when he began to Reign, and he reigned in *Jerusalem* one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of *David* his Father, and declined neither to the right-hand, nor to the left; For in the eighth year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of *David* his Father: And in the twelfth year, he began to purge *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, from the High places, and the Groves, and the Carved Images, and the molten Images. 'Twas *Obadiab's* honour, that he feared the Lord from his youth: And *Timothy's* Crown, that he knew the Scriptures from a Child, and *St. John's* J-y, that he found children walking in the truth;

Job 32. 4,
5, 6, 7.

1 *King*. 18
12.
2 *Tim*. 3.
15.
2 *Epist*.
vers. 4.

truth, this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosome; to spend further time in the proving of this truth, would be but to light Candles, to see the Sun at noon.

The Grounds and reasons of this point, viz.

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes; are these that follow.

Deut. 6. 5.
ch. 11. 13.

Augustine
beginneth
one of his
Sermons
thus (*Ad
vos mihi
Sermo, O
Juvenes,
Nunc atatis,
periculum
mentis.*)

Aug. de.
temp. Ser.
256. To
you is my
speech, O
youngmen!
the flower
of age, the
danger of
the mind.)

Reason. I.

First, Because the Lord Commands it; and Divine Commands are not to be disputed, but obeyed. In the 12. Chapter of Ecclesiastes, and the 1. Verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them: Remember now, I say, now: now is an atome, will puzzle the wisdom of a Philosopher, the skill of an Angel to divide: Now is a Monosyllable, to all learned Languages.*

Remember

Remember now thy Creator : Remember him presently, instantly, for thou dost not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canst not tell what deadly sin, what deadly temptation, what deadly judgment, may overtake thee; if thou dost not now, even now *remember thy Creator.*

Remember now thy Creatour : Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to desire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an Interest in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walk with him. *Remember now thy Creatour,* the Hebrew is *Creators*, Father, Son, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Council was called in Heaven, in the first of *Genesis*, and 29. Verse. *Remember thy Creatours*, Remember the Father, so as to know him, so as to be inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son, so as to believe in him, so as to rest upon him, so

so as to embrace him, and so as to make a compleat resignation of thy self to him. Remember the Spirit, so as to hear his voice, so as to obey his voice, so as to feel his presence, and so as to experience his influence, &c.

Remember now thy Creatour in the days of thy youth ; he doth not say in the time of thy youth , but in the days of thy youth ; to note that our life is but as a few days ; it is but a vapour, a span, a flower, a shadow, a dream ; and therefore Seneca saith well, that though death be before the old mans face, yet it is as near the young mans back &c.

Aug. 1. 1.
Confess.

Mans life is the shadow of a smock, the dream of a shadow ; one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

Ah ! Young men , God commands you to be good betimes. Remember, Young men , that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his Commands, who by another is able to command you

into

into nothing, or into Hell. To act
or run cross to Gods express Com-
mand (though under pretence of
Revelation from God) is as much
as a mans life is worth, as you may
see in that sad story, *1 King. 13. ver.*
24, &c.

Let young men put all their car-
nal Reasons, though never so ma-
ny and weighty, into one Scale,
and Gods absolute Command in
the other, and then write *Tekel* up-
on all their reasons; they are weigh-
ed in the Ballance, and found too
light.

Ah Sirs ! What God Commands
must be put in speedy execution,
without denying, or delaying, or
disputing the difficulties that at-
tend it. Most Young Men in
these days, do as the Heathens,
when their Gods called for a Man,
they offered a Candle ; or as *Her-*
cules offered up a painted man in-
stead of a living. When God
calls upon Young men to serve
him with the Primrose of their
youth, they usually put him off
till

*Obedientia
non discu-
tit Dei
mandata,
sed facit.
Prosper.*

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazelled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands, and feeble knees, but this will be bitterness in the end, &c.

Reason II.

Because they have means and opportunities of being good betimes.

Young
men must
be really
good be-
times.

Never had men better means and greater opportunities of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good, than now. Ah Lord how knowing, how believing, how Holy, how Heavenly, how Humble might young men be were they not wanting to their own souls? Young men might be good, very good, yea, eminently good, would they but improve the means of Grace, the tenders of Mercy, and the knockings of Christ by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

Erasmus.

The Antients painted Opportunity with a hairy fore-head, bald behind, to signifie, that while a man hath Opportunity before

him, he may lay hold on it, but if he suffer it to slip away, he cannot pull it back again.

How many young men are now in everlasting Chains, who would give ten thousand worlds, (had they so many in their hands to give) to enjoy but an opportunity to hear one Sermon more, to make one Prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? This is their Hell; their Torment, this is the Scorpion that is still biting, this is the Worm that is always gnawing. Woe, woe to us, that we have neglected, and trifled away those golden opportunities, that once we had to get our sins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our consciences purged, and our souls saved, &c. * I have read of a King, who having no Issue to succeed him, espying one day a well-favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to instruct him, providing by his Will, that if he prov-
ed

* Bellarm.
in concione
de crucia-
tibus Ge-
henna.

ed fit for Government, he should be crowned King, if not, he should be bound in Chains, and made a Gally-Slave. Now when he grew to years, the Kings Executors perceiving that he had sadly neglected those means and opportunities, whereby he might have been fit for State Government, called him before them, and declared the Kings Will and pleasure concerning him, which was accordingly performed, for they caused him to be fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can express how much he was affected and afflicted with his sad and miserable estate, especially when he considered with himself, that now he is chained, who might have walked at liberty; Now he is a Slave who might have been a King. Now he is over-ruled by Turks who might once have ruled over Christians? The Application is easie.

Ah

Ah! young men, young men,
 Shall Satan take all opportunities
 to tempt you? Shall the world
 take all opportunities to allure
 you? Shall Wicked men take all
 opportunities to insnare you,
 and to undo you? and shall Chri-
 stian friends take all opportuni-
 ties to better you? and shall Gods
 faithful Messengers take all op-
 portunities to save you? and will
 you? *will you neglect so great salva-*
tion? Plutarch Writes of *Hanni-*
bal, that when he could have
 taken *Rome*, he would not; and
 when he would have taken
Rome, he could not. Many in
 their youthful days, when they
 might have Mercy, Christ, Pardon,
 Heaven, they will not, and in
 old age, when they would have
 Christ, Pardon, Peace, Heaven,
 they cannot, they may not. God
 seems to say, as *Thesius* said once,
Go, says he, and tell *Creon*, *The-*
sius offers thee a gracious offer, yet
 I am pleased to be friends, if
 thou wilt submit (this is my first
 mes-

'Tis stor'd
 of *Charls*,
 King of
Sicily, and
Jerusalem,
 that he was
 called *Ca-*
rolus Cun-
stor,
Charls the
 lingerer,
 this age
 affords
 many such
 lingerers,
 &c.

message) but if this offer prevail not, look for me to be up Arms.

Reason III.

Because then they have fewer and lesser sins to answer, and repent of, multitudes of sins and sorrows are prevented by being good betimes.

Why youngmen should be really good betimes. Lord saith Austin, I have loved thee late, the greater was his sin and the more were his sorrows

The more we number our days, the fewer sins we shall have to number. As a Copy is then safest from blotting, when dust is put upon it; so are we from sinning when (in the time of our youth) we remember that we are but dust. The tears of young penitents do more scorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blasted, and the great underminer, countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, he bids tarry time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, and he bids Repent early in the morning of thy youth; for then thy sins will be fewer.

than a *Pist*, signifies any thing that is light, because light things are quick in motion.

The Ancients emblemed time with wings, as it were, not running but flying. Time is like the Sun, that never stands still, but is still a running his race; the Sun did once stand still, yea, went back, but so did never Time. Time is still running and flying; it is a bubble, a shadow, a dream, can you seriously consider of this, young men, and not *begin to be good betimes*? Surely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon we tread were turned into a lump of Gold, it were not able to purchase one minute of time! Oh the regrettings of the damned, for mis-spending precious time! Oh what would they not give to be free, and to enjoy the means of grace one hour! Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungering and thirsting would they hear the

C

Word!

Sophocles.
Phocilides.

Who is there among us that knows how to value time, and prize a day at a due rate?
See. Epi.

message) but if this offer prevail not, look for me to be up Arms.

Reason III.

Because then they have fewer and lesser sins to answer, and repetition of, multitudes of sins and sorrows are prevented by being good long times.

Why youngmen should be really good betimes. Lord saith Austin, I have loved thee late, the greater was his sin and the more were his sorrows

The more we number our days, the fewer sins we shall have to number. As a Copy is then safest from blotting, when dust is put upon it; so are we from sinning when (in the time of our youth) we remember that we are but dust. The tears of young penitents do more scorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blasted, and the great underminer, countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, he bids tarry time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, and he bids Repent early in the morning of thy youth; for then thy sins will be fewer.

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C

Word!

Sophocles.
Phocilides.

Who is
there a-
mong us
that knows
how to va-
lue time,
and prize
a day at a
due rate?
See. Epi.

A Heathen
said, He li-
ved no day
without a
line, that
is, he did
something
remarka-
ble every
day.

Word ! Time (saith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in Hell, and the traffick of it most gainful, where, for one day a man would give ten thousand worlds if he had them; Young men, can you in good earnest believe this, and not begin to be good betimes ?

Ah ! Young men and Women, as you love your precious immortal Souls, as you would escape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would be happy in Life, and blessed in Death, and glorious after Death ; don't spend any more of your precious time, in drinking and drabbing, in carding, dicing, and dancing ; don't trifle away your time ; don't swear away your time ; don't Whore away your time ; do not lye away your time, but begin to be good betimes, because time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for : Ah ! Young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when possibly you have

not so many hours to make ready your accompts, it may be this night you may have a summons, and then if your time be done, and your work to be begun, in what a sad case will you be, will you not wish that you had never been born?

Seneca was wont to jeer the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they lost one day in seven; meaning their Sabbath; O! that it were not too true of the most of Professors, both young and old, that they lose not only one day in seven, but several days in seven.

Sirs! Time let slip cannot be recalled, the foolish Virgins found it so, and *Saul* found it so, and *Herod* found it so, and *Nero* found it so, the *Israelites* found it so, yea, and *Jacob*, and *Josiah*, and *David* (though good men) yet they found it so to their cost.

The *Egyptians* draw the Picture of Time with three Heads, the first of a greedy Wolf, gaping for time past; because it hath

Mat. 25. 5
1 Sam. 13.
13.
Heb 3. 17,
18, 19.

ravenously devoured the memory of so many things, past recalling. The

Second of a crowned Lyon, roaring for time present, because it hath the principality of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a deceitful Dog, sawning for time to come, because it feeds some men with many flattering hopes, to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, concerning this talent of time, with which God hath trusted you, begin to be good betimes, &c.

Why
young men
should be
really good
betimes.
Seneca,
(though a
Heathen)
could say,
believe me
true joy is
no light
thing.

Reason V.

Because they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to be old.

The 71 Psalm 5, 17, 18, compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, Thou art my trust, from my youth. O God thou hast taught me from*

from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works; Now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come.

Polycarpus could say, when old, Thus many years have I served my Master Christ, and hitherto hath he dealt well with me; if early Converts live to be old, no joy to their joy, their joy will be the greatest joy, a joy like to their joy of Harvest, a joy like to their joy that divide the spoil, the joy will be the soundest joy, the weightiest joy, the holiest joy, the purest joy, the strongest joy, and the most lasting joy; the Carnal joy of the Wicked, the glistering (golden) joy of the Worldling, and the flashing joy of the Hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of such, who when old, can say with good Obadiah, that they feared the Lord

C 3 from

Isa. 9. 3.

from their youth. If when you are young, your eyes shall be full of tears (for sin) when you are old, your heart will be full of joys. Such shall have the best Wine at last.

Oh! That Young men would begin to be good betimes, that so they may have the greater Harvest of Joy, when they come to be old, &c. 'tis sad to be sowing your seed, when you should be reaping your Harvest; 'tis best to gather in the Summer of youth, against the Winter of old age.

Why
Young
men should
be really
good be-
times.

Reason VI.

Because an eternity of felicity, and glory, hangs upon those few moments that are allotted to them.

Luk. 10. 25

It was a good question the young man proposed, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* I know I shall be eternally happy, or eternally miserable, eternally blest, or eternally curst, eternally, saved, or eternally damned, &c.

O what shall I do to inherit eternal life? my cares, my fears, my troubles are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can express eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day, which shall never have end; what shall I do, what shall I not do, that I may be happy to all eternity?

I am now young, and in the flower of my days; but who knows what a day may bring forth? the greatest weight hangs upon the smallest wires, an eternity depends upon those few hours I am to breathe in the world; O! what cause have I therefore to be good betimes, to know God betimes, to believe betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon sealed betimes, to get my nature changed, my conscience purged, and my interest in Christ cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes me, before my Glass be out,

C. 4

my

Aernitas est semper & inamutabile esse.
The old Romans were out that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues, & in Marble Monuments.

my Sun-set, my Race run, lest the dark night of eternity should overtake me, and I made miserable for ever.

Luk. 15. 19
10,

I have read of one (*Myrogenes*) who when great gifts were sent unto him, he sent them all back again, saying, I only desire this one thing at your Masters hand ; to pray for me, that I may be saved for eternity. O that all young men and women, who make earth their Heaven, pleasure their Paradise, that eat the fat, and drink the sweet, that cloath themselves richly, and crown their heads with Rose-buds, that they would seriously consider of eternity, so as to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity ! that they may say with that famous Painter *Zeuxes* (*Aeternitaspingo*) I paint for eternity, we do all for eternity, we believe for eternity, we repent for eternity, we obey for eternity, &c.

Oh that you would not make those

those things eternal for punishment, that cannot be eternal for use.

Ah! Young men and women, God calls, and the blood of Jesus Christ calls, and the Spirit of Christ in the Gospel calls, and the rage of Satan calls, and your sad state and condition calls, and the happiness and blessedness of glorified Saints calls; these all call aloud upon you to make sure a glorious Eternity, before you sail out into the dreadful Ocean. All your eternal good depends upon the short and uncertain moments of your lives; and if the thread of your lives should be cut before a happy eternity is made sure, woe to you that ever you were born; Do not say, O Young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will be time enough to provide for Eternity, for Eternity may be at the door, ready to carry thee away for ever. Every days experience speaks out Eternity to be as near the Young mans back,

*Cur ea quæ
ad usum
diuturna
esse non
possunt, ad
supplicium
diuturna
deposcet
Ambrose in
Luk. 4. T. 5.*

as 'tis before the old mans face.

Heb. 3. 7, 8
15, 16, 18,
19.

① grasp to day the Diadem of a blessed eternity, lest thou art cut off before the morning comes! though there is but one way to come into this world, yet there is a thousand thousand ways to be sent out of this world; Well Young men and women, remember this, as the motions of the soul are quick, so are the motions of Divine Justice quick also; and if you will not hear the voice of God to day, if you will not provide for eternity to day, God may swear to morrow that you shall never enter into his rest; it is a very sad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his Word, his Offers, our own souls and eternity: Therefore let all young people labour to be good betimes, and not to leave him, that is goodness it self, alone, till he hath made them good, till he hath given them those hopes of eternity that will both make them good, and keep them good.

good, that will make them happy, and keep them happy: and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know that e're long those fears of eternity, of misery, that beget that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa's Head*, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro, Spero*, so it may be inverted, *Dum Spero, Spiro*; other miseries may wound the spirit, but Despair kills it dead; my prayers shall be that none of you may ever experience this sad truth, but that you may all be good in good earnest betimes, which will yield you two Heavens, a Heaven on Earth, and a Heaven after Death.

Reason VII.

Because they do not begin to live, till they begin to be really good.

Till they begin to be good, they are

Why
young per-
sons should
be really
good be-
times.

are dead God-wards, and Christ-wards, and Heaven-wards, and Holiness-wards; till a man begins to be really good, he is really dead, *Philippians 2. 1.* and that,

*Respectu
operis.*

First in respect of working, his works are called dead works, *Heb. 9. 14.* the most glittering services of unregenerate persons, are but dead works, because they proceed not from a principle of Life, and they lead to death, *Rom. 6. 21.* and leave a sentence of death upon the soul, till it be washed off by the blood of the Lamb.

*Respectu
honoris.*

Secondly, He is dead in respect of honour, he is dead to all privileges, he is not fit to inherit mercy; who will set the Crown of Life upon a Dead man? The Crown of life is only for living Christians, *Revelations 2. 10.* The young Prodigal was dead till he began to be good, till he began to remember his Father's house, and to resolve, to return home, *My Son was dead, but is alive,*

Luk. 15. 24

live; and the Widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth.

When *Josaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old he was? he answered, five and forty years old, to whom *Josaphat* replied, thou seemest to be seventy, true saith he, if you reckon ever since I was born; but I count not those years which were spent in vanity.

Ah Sirs! you never begin to live, till you begin to be good in good earnest. There is the life of Vegetation, and that is the life of Plants: Secondly, there is the life of Sense, and that is the life of Beasts; Thirdly, there is the life of Reason, and that is the life of man, Fourthly, there is the life of Grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not begin to live, till you begin to be good: If a living Dog is better than a dead Lyon, as the Wise-man speaks, and if a Flie is more excellent than the Heavens, because the Flie hath

1 Tim. 5. 6
As it is a
reproach
to an old
man to be
in Coats,
so 'tis a dis-
grace to be
an old
babe, i. e.
to be but a
babe in
grace,
when old
in years,
Heb. 5. 12,
13, 14.

Ecc. 9. 4.

Metanas
in *Seneca*
had rather
live in ma-
ny diseases,
than dye.
And *Ho-*
mer report-
eth of his
Achilles,
that he had
rather be a
servant to
a poor
Country
Clown
here, than
to be a
King to all
the souls
departed.

hath life, which the Heavens have not, as the Philosopher saith; what a sad, a dead, poor nothing is that person, that is a stranger to the life of grace and goodness, that is dead even whilst he is alive?

Most men will bleed, sweat, vomit, purge, part with an estate, yea, with a limb, I limbs, yea, and many a better thing, (*viz.* the honour of God, and a good Conscience) to preserve their Natural lives: as he crys out: Give me any deformity, any torment, any misery, so you spare my life; and yet how few, how very few are to be found, who make it their work, their business, to attain to a life of goodness, or to begin to be good betimes, or to be dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to be dead to God, and alive to the world? this is for a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that natural life is so highly prized, and spiritual life so little regarded, &c.

Reason V III.

Because the Promise of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early seeking of God.

Prov. 8. 17. *I love them that love me, and they that seek me early, shall find me.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that seek me in the morning, shall find me. By the benefit of the morning light we come to find the things we seek. *Shahbar* signifies to seek inquisitively, to seek diligently, to seek timely in the morning. As the *Israelites* went early in the morning to seek for Manna. And as Students rise early in the Morning, and sit close to it, to get knowledge; so saith Wisdom, *They that seek me in the spring and morning of their youth, shall find me.*

Now to seek the Lord early, is to seek the Lord firstly. God hath in himself all the good of Angels, of Men, and Universal Nature; he hath all glories, all dignities, all riches, all treasures, all

Why
youngmen
should be
really good
betimes.

שחר
Exo. 16. 21
Scipio went
first to the
Capitol,
and thence
to the Senate.
Tully an
Heathen,
frequently
called God
*Optimum
maximum,*
the best &
greatest.
God is *om-
nis super
omnia.*

all pleasures, all comforts, all delights, all joys, all beatitudes. God is that one infinite perfection in himself, which is eminently, and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therefore he is firstly to be sought. Abstracts do better express him, than Concretes and Adjectives; he is Being, Bounty, Power, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, goodness, and love it self, and therefore worthy to be sought before all other things. Seek ye firstly the good things of the mind, saith *Philosophy*, and doth not *Divinity* say as much?

Cicero.

Days of
grace have
their dates,
therefore
take heed
of saying,
Cras, cras,
to morrow,
to morrow.

Again, to seek early, is to seek opportunely, to seek while the opportunity does present, *Judg. 9. 33* *Thou shalt rise early, and set upon the City;* that is, thou shalt opportunely set upon the City.

Such there have been, who by giving a glass of Water opportunely, have obtained a Kingdom, as you may see in the story of *Thamastus*, and King *Agrippa*.

Ah!

Ah! Young Men and Women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune seeking of God, you may obtain a Kingdom that shakes not, and Glory that passeth not away.

Heb. 11. 28

There is a season wherein God may be found, *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near*; and if you slip this season, you may seek him, and miss him. *Though they cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them, when you make many prayers, I will not hear. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but shall not find me.* This was Saul's misery; *The Philistins are upon me; and God will not answer me*; 'tis justice that they should seek, and not find at last, who might have found, had they but sought seasonably and opportunely, &c.

Isa. 55. 6.

Jer. 11. 11.

Isa. 1. 15.

Mic. 3. 4.

Prov. 1. 28

Again

Isa. 26. 9.

Again, to seek early, is to seek earnestly, affectionately. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early*: The Hebrew word signifies both an earnest, and an early seeking; in the morning the spirits are up, and men are earnestly, and affectionate.

Psal. 5. 3.

11, 12.

אֶעֱרֹךְ
וְאֶצְפֶּה

Ah! such a seeking shall certainly be crowned with finding. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord in the morning will I direct (Hebrew martial) my Prayer unto thee, and will look up, Hebrew, look out like a watch-man. Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice, let them ever shout for joy; because thou defendest them (Hebrew, thou coverest over, or protectest them) Let them also that love thy Name, be joyful in thee: for thou Lord, wilt bless the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compass him (Hebrew, crown him) as with a Shield. None have ever thus sought the Lord, but they have, or certainly shall find*

find him. Seek and ye shall find, Mat. 7. 7. Your hearts shall live that seek God, Psalm 69. 32. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, The working prayer of a righteous man availeth much; that prayer that sets the whole man to work, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earnest prayer, like *Sauls* Sword, and *Jonathans* Bow, never returns empty.

One speaking of *Luther*, who was a man very earnest in prayer, said, (*hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit*) this man could have what he would of God, &c.

Again, to seek early, is to seek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what we first seek, we seek as chief. Now to seek the Lord early, is to seek him primarily, chiefly, in the 63. Psalm, and 1. verse, *Thou art my God, early will I seek thee*, that is, I will seek thee, as my choicest, and my

ἐνεργη-

μεν.

It signifies such a working as notes the liveliest activity that can be,

Omne bonum in summo bono.

my chiefest good. God is *Alpha* the Fountain from whence all grace springs; and *Omega*, the Sea to which all glory runs; and therefore early and primarily to be sought. God is a perfect good, a solid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur, cui nil accedere, solidum cui nil decedere potest. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good, to which nothing can be added, that a solid, from which nothing can be spared; such a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to be sought. God is a pure and simple good, he is a light in whom there is no darkness, a good in whom there is no evil. The goodness of the Creature is mixt, yea, that little goodness that is in the creature, is mix'd with much evil, but God is an immix'd good, he is good, he is a pure good, he is all over good, he is nothing but good. God is an All-sufficient good, *before me, and be upright, I am God All-sufficient, in the 17. of Genesis and the 1. Verse. Habet omnia quae habet*

1 Joh. I. 5.

*Quicquid
est in Deo,
est ipse Deus.*

habet habentem omnia. Aug. He hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himself all power to defend you, all wisdom to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to enrich you, all righteousness to cloath you, all goodness to supply you, and all happiness to Crown you. God is a satisfying good, a good that fills the heart, and quiets the soul: in the 33. of *Genesis*, and the 11. verse. *I have enough*, saith good *Jacob*, *I have all*, saith *Jacob*, for so the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, &c. In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him, I seek no other reward, for *he is the universal reward*, saith one. As the worth and value of many pieces of Silver is to be found in one piece of Gold: So all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are to be found in God, yea, all the whole volume of Perfections, which

Sanz. 2.3.

*Omnis co-
pia qua
non est De-
us meus,
mihi ege-
stas est.*

*Aug. Soli-
loq. c. 13.*

which is spread through Heaven and Earth, is Epitomized in him. No good, below him that is the greatest good, can satisfy the soul; a good wife, a good child, a good name, a good estate, a good friend, cannot satisfy the soul; these may please, but they cannot satisfy. All abundance, if it be not my God, is to me nothing but poverty, and want, said one.

Ah! that young men and women would but in the morning of their youth, seek, yea seek early, seek earnestly, seek affectionately, seek diligently, seek primarily, and seek unweariedly this God, who is the greatest good, the best good, the most desirable good; who is a suitable good, a pure good, a satisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good.

Why
young per-
sons should
be really
good be-
times.

Reason IX.

*Because the time of youth is the
choicest and finest time for service.*

No

Now your parts are lively, senses fresh, memory strong, and nature vigorous, the days of your youth, are the spring and morning of your time, they are the first-born of your strength, therefore God requires your non-age, as well as your dotage, the Wine of your times, as well as the Lees, as you may see typified to you in the first fruits which were dedicated to the Lord, and the first-born. The time of youth, is the time of salvation, it is the acceptable time, it is thy summer, thy Harvest time. O young man! therefore do not sleep, but up and be doing, awaken thy heart, rouse up thy soul, and improve all thou hast, put out thy reason, thy strength, thy all, to the treasuring up of heavenly Graces, precious Promises, divine experiences, and spiritual comforts against the Winter of old age; and then old age will not be to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham*, a good old age; do not put off God with fair

The days of youth are called, *etate bona*, in *Cicero*: and *etate optima*, in *Seneca*.

Exod. 13. 2

ch. 22. 9.

Gen 15. 18

Mal. i. 14.

Jer. ii. 11.
The Al-
mond-tree
blossoms
in *January*
(while it
is yet win-
ter) and
the fruit
is ripe in
March.

fair promises and large pretences till your last lands are running, and the days of dotage have overtaken you. That is a sad word of the Prophet, *Cursed be the Deceiver which hath in his Flock a Male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

Ah! Young men and women who are like the Almond-tree, you have many Males in the Flock; your strength is a Male in your flock, your time is a Male in the flock, your reason is a Male in the flock, your parts are a Male in the flock, and your gifts are a Male in the flock; now if he be curst that hath but one Male in his flock, and shall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value, how will you be curst, and curst at home, and curst abroad, curst temporally, curst spiritually, and curst eternally, who have many Males in your flock, and yet deal so unworthily, so fraudulently, and false-heartedly with God, as to put him off with the dregs of your

your time and strength while you spend the Primrose of your youth in the service of the World, the Flesh and the Devil.

The Fig-tree in the Gospel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and seasonably, was curst to admiration; the time of youth is the time and season for bringing forth the fruits of Righteousness and Holiness, and if these fruits be not brought forth in their season, you may justly fear, that the curses of Heaven will secretly, and insensibly soak, and sink into your souls, and then wo, wo to you, that ever you were born; the best way to prevent this Hell of Hells, is to give God the Cream and Flower of your youth, your Strength, your Time, your Talents; Vessels that are betime seasoned with the favour of life, never lose it, *Prov. 22.6.*

Reason X.

Because death may suddenly and un-
D *expected*

Mat. 21. 30

Why
young persons should
be really
good (in
good ear-
nest) be-
times.

expectedly seize upon you, you have no lease of your lives.

*Dives nascentur
paries mori-
untur*, in
the womb,
and in the
tomb, they
are all a-
like.

Job 21. 23
24.

'Tis an al-
legorical
description
of the
highest
prosperity.

Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may find Graves enough of his length in burial places; as green Wood, and old Logs meet in one fire, so young sinners and old sinners meet (in one Hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his spring and prime, then he is cut off, and dyes; one dyeth in his full strength (or in the strength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at ease and quiet; His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. *David's* children dyed when young, so did *Job's* and *Jeroboam's*, &c. Every days experience tells us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet, who brings in a proper Young man, rich and potent, discoursing with Death in the habit of a Mower, with his Sythe in his hand

hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all Flesh is Grass*, Isa. 40. 6.) and wilt thou not spare any mans person, saith the young man? I spare none saith Death, mans life is but a day, a short day, a winters day, oft-times the Sun goes down upon a man, before it be well up; your day is short, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you should rise early, and set forward towards Heaven betimes, as that man doth that hath a long journey to go in a winters day.

The life of man is absolutely short. *Behold thou hast made my days as an hands-breadth.* The life of man is comparatively short, and that if you compare mans life now to what he might have reacht, had he continued in Innocency. Sin brought in Death, Death is a fall, that came in by a fall; or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then several lived six, seven, eight, nine hun-

Deaths motto is,
Nulli es
I yield to none.

Psal. 39.

Gen. 5.

Psal. 39. 5.

dred years; or if you compare mens days with the days of God, *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the days of man, to the days of Eternity.

The Hea-then could say, that the whole life of man should be nothing else but (*Meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death.

Ah! Young men, young men can you seriously consider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of grace your precious Souls, and Eternity, &c? Surely you cannot, surely you dare not; if you do but in good earnest, ponder upon the shortness of mans life. It is recorded of *Philip King of Macedon* that he gave a pension to one, to come to him every day at dinner and to cry to him (*Memento te mortalem*) remember thou art but mortal.

Ah! Young men and Old, have need be often put in mind of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that day, yea, to put far from them the thoughts of that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bitter word

Death

Death, mentioned in their ears, and surely this age is full of such monsters.

And as the life of man is very short, so it is very uncertain, now well, now sick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not always give warning before-hand, sometimes he gives the mortal blow suddenly, he comes behind with his dart, and strikes a man at the heart, before he saith, *Have I found thee, O mine Enemy?* Euticus fell down dead suddenly, *Act. 20. 19.* Death suddenly arrested *David's* Sons, and *Job's* Sons; *Augustus* dyed in a Complement; *Galba*, with a Sentence; *Vespasian*, with a Jest; *Zenxes* dyed laughing at the Picture of an old Woman, which he drew with his own hand; *Sophocles* was choaked with the stone in a Grape; *Diodorus* the Logician dyed for shame, that he could not answer a jocular question propounded at the table by *Stilpo*; *Joannes Measius*, preaching upon the raising of the woman

Petrarch tell us of one who being invited to dinner the next day, answered, *Ego à multis annis, crastinum not habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

of *Naim's* Son from the dead, within three hours after dyed himself.

Ah! Young men and Women, have you not cause, great cause to be good betimes, for Death is sudden in his approaches, nothing more sure than Death, and nothing more uncertain than Life! therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your sins betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never say as *Cesar Borgia* said, when he was sick to death, When I lived (said he) I provided for every thing but Death, now I must die and am unprovided to die &c.

Reason XI.

Why
young per-
sons should
be really
good be-
times.

Because it is ten to one, nay an hundred to one if ever they are converted if they are not converted when they are young.

God

God usually begins with such be-
times, that he hath had thoughts of
love and mercy towards them
from everlasting: The instances
cited to prove the Doctrine, con-
firms this Argument, and if you
look abroad in the world, you
shall hardly find one Saint among
a thousand, but dates his conver-
sion from the time of his Youth.
'Twas the young ones that got
through the Wilderness into Ca-
naan. If the Tree do not bud,
and blossom, and bring forth fruit
in the Spring, it is commonly
dead all the year after, if in the
spring and morning of your days,
you do not bring forth fruit to
God, it is an hundred to one, that
ever you bring forth fruit to him,
when the evil days of old age
shall overtake you, wherein you
shall say, you have no pleasure.
For as the Son of *Syrach* observes,
if thou hast gathered nothing in
thy youth, what canst thou find
in thy age? 'Tis rare, very rare,
that God sows and reaps in old
D 4 age,

Hos. 11. 1.
When *Is-
rael* was
a child,
then I lov-
ed him,
&c.

Numb. 26.
64.

An He-
brew Do-
ctor ob-
serves, that
of those six
hundred
thousand
that went
out of *A-
gypt*, there
were but
two per-
sons that
entered Ca-
naan.

Eccl. 25. 5.

age, usually God sows the seed of grace in youth, that yields the harvest of joy in age.

Though true Repentance be never too late, yet late Repentance is seldom true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleased themselves with the thoughts of after-Repentance. The Lord hath made a Promise to late repentance, but where hath he made a Promise of late Repentance? Yes, what can be more just and equal, that such should seek, and not find, who might have found, but would not seek; and that he should shut his ears against their late prayers, who have stopt their ears against his early Calls? The Ancient Warriours would not accept an old man into their Army, being unfit for service, and dost thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath suckt out all the marrow? what Lord, what Master, will take such into their service, who have all their days served their ene-

Prov. 1.
24. 32.

enemies? and will God, will God? the *Circassians* (a kind of Mongrel Christians) are said to divide their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their Youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this be thy case, I would not be in thy case for ten thousand worlds.

I have read of a certain great man, that was admonished in his sickness to repent, who answered, that he would not repent yet, for if he should recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing sicker and sicker, his friends pressed him again to repent, but then he told them, that was too late (*Quia jam judicatus sum, & condemnatus*) for now, said he, I am Judged and condemned.

Breew.
Enqri.

Beda hath
this story.

Reason XII,

Because else they will never attain to the honour of being Old Disciples.

Why
young persons should
be really
good be-
times.

CHAP. II.

It is a very great honour to be an Old Disciple.

What more ridiculous than (puer centum annorum) a child of an hundred years old?

NOW this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth: It is no honour for an old man to be in coats, nor for an old man to be a babe in grace. An A, B, C. old man, is a sad and shameful sight: O but it is a mighty honour to be a man when he is old, that he can date his conversion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to be an old Disciple, I shall prove by an induction of Particulars. As

Particular I.

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

All men will honour an old Disciple, Prov. 16. 31. The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness. God requires that the aged should be honoured,

honoured, *Levit. 19. 32. Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man* (the old man here, is expounded by some, the wise man) *and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* Hoariness is only honourable, when found in a way of righteousness, a white head accompanied with a holy heart, makes a man truly honourable. There are two glorious sights in the world, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightness; and the other is, an old man walking in ways of righteousness; 'Twas *Abraham's* honour, that he went to his grave in a good old age; or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there be that go to their graves with a gray head; but this was *Abraham's* Crown, that he went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abraham's* head been never so gray, if it had not been good, it would have been no honour to him; a hoary head, when coupled with an unsanctified heart, is rather a curse than a blessing.

Gen. 25. 8

Isa. 65. 20.

Lam. 5. 12.

Deut. 28.
49, 50.

blessing, when the head is as white as Snow, and the soul as black as Hell ; God usually gives up such to the greatest scorn and contempt. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce Countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.*

I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself, *Ariston* wondering thereat, asked him, whom chidest thou ? *Cleanthes* laughed and answered, I chide an old Fellow (*qui canos quidam halet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world, but their hoary heads, and snowy beards.

Particular II.

God usually reveals himself most to Old Disciples, to Old Saints, Job 12. 12. *With the Ancient is wisdom, and in length of days Understanding.* God usually manifests most of himself to aged Saints, they usually pray most, and pay most, they labour most, and long most after the choicest ministrations of himself, and of his grace; and therefore he opens his bosom most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet Council, Gen. 18. 17, 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, for I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which he hath spoken of him. Abraham was an old friend, and therefore God makes him both of his Court and Council; we usually open our hearts most freely, fully and, familiarly,*
to

בְּיָשָׁרִים
in the an-
cient is
wisdom.
Valentia-
nius the
Emperor's
Motto, was
(amicus
veterimus
optimus)
an old
friend is
best.

Luk. 2.25,
26,27,28.

Verf. 36.
37,38.

Phil. 4.9,
7.9.

Rev. 1.7.
10 ult.

to old friends : So doth God to his ancient friends. Ah, what a blessed sight and enjoyment of Christ had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him ! Now *Lord* lettist thou thy *Servant* depart in peace, according to thy Word, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation, &c. I have seen him, who is my light, life, my love, my joy, my crown, my heaven, my all? thereto now let thy *Servant* depart in peace. So *Ann*, when she was fourscore and four years old, was so filled with the discoveries and enjoyments of Christ, that she could not but declare what she had tasted, felt, seen, heard and received from the Lord : She was ripe, and ready to discover the fulness, sweetness, goodness, excellency, and glory of that Christ, whom she had long loved, feared, and served. So *Paul* lived in the light, sight, and sweet enjoyments of Christ, when aged, in years, in grace. So, when had *John* that glorious vision of Christ among the

the golden Candlesticks, and those discoveries and manifestations of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichrist, the casting the beast, and false Prophet into a Lake of Fire, the conquest of the Kingdoms of the World, by Christs Bow and Sword, the binding up of Satan, and New *Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, but when was sold, when he was aged, in years and in Grace? The Lord speaks many a secret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Christians, which young Christians are not acquainted with, as that Phrase imports, *2 Sam. 7. 27. Thou O Lord God of Hosts hast revealed to thy Servant*, so you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord, thou hast revealed this to the ear of thy servant. Some wonder how that word to the ear, came to be left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphasis lies; we will tell many things in an old friends ear, which we will not acquaint young persons with. So doth God many times

גליטה
נתחזק

Galitha c-
thozem.

times whisper an old Disciple in the ear, and acquaints him with such things, that he hides from those that are of younger years. And by this you may see what a honour it is to be an Old Disciple.

Particular III.

An Old Disciple, an Old Christian, he hath got the Art of serving God, the Art of Religion, got the Art of hearing, the Art of praying, the Art of meditating, the Art of repenting, the Art of believing, the Art of denying his natural self, his sinful self, his religious self.

Heb 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yct as Solomon was not ashamed to say, that in his old age he was a learner, so those that are the greatest Artists in Christianity, will confess, that they are still but learners.

All Trades have their mystery and difficulty; so hath the Trade of Christianity; young Christians usually bungle in religious works, but old Christians acquit themselves, like work-men that need not be ashamed. A young Carpenter gives more blows, and makes more chips, but an old Artist doth the most, and best work; a young Christian may make most noise in religious Duties, but

an old Christian makes the best work. A young Musician may play more quick and nimble upon an instrument, than an old, but an old Musician hath more skill and judgment than a young: the Application is easie; and by this you may also see, what an honour it is to be an old Christian.

Particular IV.

An Old Disciple, an old Christian, is rich in spiritual experiences. O the experiences that he hath of the Ways of God, of the Workings of God, of the Word of God, of the Love of God! O the divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the word, of the sweetness of the Word, of the usefulness of the Word! as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spur to quicken the soul, as an anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that he can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the blood of Christ, the

Offices

1 Joh. 2. 1.
Psal. 119.
49. 50.
Old men
love to
speak of
ancient
things.

Offices of Christ, the Merits of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, the graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ. O the stories that an Old Disciple can tell you, of the indwellings of the Spirit, of the operations of the Spirit, of the teachings of the Spirit, of the leadings of the Spirit, of the sealings of the Spirit of the witnessings of the Spirit, and of the comforts and joys of the Spirit! O the stories that an old Christian can tell you, of the evil of Sin, the bitterness of Sin, the deceitfulness of Sin, the prevalency of Sin, and the happiness of the conquest over Sin! O the stories that he can tell you, of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulness of Satan, and the ways of triumphing over Satan! As an old Souldier can tell you, of many battels, many scars, many wounds, many losses, and many victories, even to admiration: So an old Saint is able to tell you many

many divine stories, even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the Crocodile, that she grows to her last day : So aged Saints, they grow rich in spiritual experience to the last. An Old Christian being once asked, if he grew in goodness, answered, yea, doubtless I do, for God hath said, *The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never loseth his leaf, or fruit, saith Pliny) *he shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God; They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.*

A fellow to this Promise Isaiah mentions, *Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by me from the belly, which are carryed from the womb, and even to your old age; I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.*

There

Hof. 14. 5,
6, 7.

Pf. 29. 12,
13, 14.

Isa. 46. 3, 4

Dan 7.9,
13,22.

There is nothing more commendable in fulness of age, than fulness of knowledge and experience, nor nothing more honourable, than to see Antient Christians very much acquainted with the Antient of days.

It is a brave sight to see Antient Christians like the Almond-tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flourish, and is full of blossoms in the Winter of old age; for as *Pliny* tells us, the Almond-tree doth blossom in the month of *January*. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions and expressions; a sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue; no man so rich, so honourable, so happy, as the old Disciple, that is rich in Spiritual experiences; and yet there is no Christian so rich in his experiences, but he would be richer.

The
Lawyer.

As *Julianus* said, that when he had one foot in the grave, he would have the other in the School: So, though an Old Disciple hath one foot in the grave; yet

yet he will have the other in Christs School, that he may still be treasuring up more and more Divine Experiments; and by this also you see, *What an honour it is to be an Old Disciple, &c.*

Particular V.

An Old Disciple is very stout, courageous, firm, and fixt in his resolution.

An old Christian is like a Pillar, a Rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him; what is suckt in in youth, will abide in old age; Old Souldiers are stout and courageous, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how courageous and resolute was he! And if it seem evil unto you, to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Floud, or the Gods of the Amonites, in whose Land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the

Psal. 44. 9
ult.

Josh. 24.
15, 29.

the Lord. And it came to pass, after these things, that Joshua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the Lord dyed, being an hundred and ten years old.

Confidius, a Senator of Rome, told *Caesar* boldly, that the Senators durst not come to counsel, for fear of his Souldiers; he replied, why then dost thou go to the Senate? he answered, because my age takes away my fear.

Ah! none so couragious, none so divinely fearless, none so careless in evil days, as ancient Christians. An old Christian knows, that that good will do him no good, which is not made good by perseverance; his resolution is like that of *Gonsalvo*, who protested to his Souldiers, shewing them *Naples*, that he had rather die one foot forwards, than to have his life secured for long, by one foot of retreat. Shall such a man as I am flee, said undaunted *Nehemiah*? he will courageously venture life and limb, rather than by one foot of retreat.

Neh. 6. 11.

retreat, discredit profession with the reproach of fearfulness. It was a brave magnanimous speech of *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates; Come (saith he) let us sing the forty sixth *Psalme*, and then let them do their worst.

Aristotle
(though a
Heathen)
could say,
that in
some cases
a man had
better lose
his life,
than be
cowardly,
Arist. E-
thic 3. c. 1.

When *Polycarpus* was fourscore and six years old, he suffered Martyrdom couragiously, resolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the Ancient Martyrs was very much threatned by his Persecutors, he replied, there is nothing of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will.

Old Disciples, Old Souldiers of Christ, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *David's* Worthies, who stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled. The Hebrews call a young man *Naggar*,

2 Sam. 13.
11, 12.

Mat. 19.
20, 21, 22.

Nagnar, which springs from a root that signifies to shake off, or to be tossed to and fro, to note how fickle, and how constant in inconstancy young men are, they usually are persons either of no resolution for good, or of weak resolution; they are too often won with a Nut, and lost with an Apple; but now, aged Christians, in all Earthquakes they stand fast, like Mount Sion, that cannot be removed. And by this also you may see, *what an honour it is to be an old Disciple, an old Christian.*

Particular V I.

Rom. 6. 6
Gal. 5. 24.
ch. 6. 14.

An Old Disciple, an old Christian is prepared for death, he hath been long dying to sin, to the world, to friends, to self, to relations, to all, and no man so prepared to die, as he that thus daily dies.

Rom. 14.
7, 8.
Phil. 2. 21,
22, 23.

An Old Disciple hath lived sincerely to Christ, he hath lived eminently to Christ, he hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Christ, he hath lived exemplarily to Christ, he hath liv-
ed

ed long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to die, and be with Christ. An old Disciple hath a Crown in his eye, a pardon in his bosom, and a Christ in his arms; and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, Lord, now let thy *Servant* depart in peace. As *Hilary* said to his Soul; Soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years; and art thou afraid of Death? Go out Soul, go out.

Many a day, said old *Comper*, have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrours, devour me, devour me. And *Augustine*, when old, could say, shall I die ever? yes, or shall I dye at all? yes, why then Lord, if ever, why not now? why not now? So when *Modestus* the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Basil*, he answered, if that be all, I fear not; yea, your Master cannot more pleasure me, than

Zeno a wise Hea-then, said, I have no fear but of old age.

Cyprian could receive the cruellest sentence of death, with a *Deo gratias*. God thank thee.

in sending me unto my Heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I desire to hasten.

Isa. 57. 1, 2

Ecc. 7. 1.

It was the saying of an Antient Minister a little before his death, I cannot say, I have so lived, that I should now be afraid to die, but this I can say, I have so learned Christ, that I am not afraid to die. Old Christians have made no more to die, than to Dine. It is nothing to die, when the Comforter stands by. Old Disciples know, that to die, is but to lie down in their beds, they know that their dying day is better than their Birth day; and this made *Solomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his dissolution before the day of his Coronation.

The Antients were wont to call the days of their death, *Natalia*, not dying days, but birth days.

The Jews to this day, stick not to call their *Golguthaes*, *Bate Caiaim*, the houses or places of the Living; Old Christians know

that

that Death is but an entrance into Life, 'tis but a Pasſeover, a Jubilee, 'tis but the Lords Gentleman-uſher to conduct them to Heaven, and this prepares them to die, and makes death more deſireable than life, and by this you may ſee, that it is an honour to be an Old Diſciple.

Particular VII.

An Old Diſciple, an Old Chriſtian ſhall have a great reward in Heaven.

Old Chriſtians have done much and ſuffered much for Chriſt; and the more any man doth or ſuffers for Chriſt here, the more glory he ſhall have hereafter. 'Twas the ſaying of an Old Diſciple upon his dying bed, He is come, He is come (meaning the Lord) with a great Reward, for a little Work, Agrippa having ſuffered imprisonment for wiſhing *Caius* Emperor; the firſt thing *Caius* did, when he came to the Empire; was to prefer Agrippa to a Kingdom,

1 Cor. 15. ult.

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12.

God will reward his Servants *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum preventum*, according to the ſucceſs of their labour.

he gave him also a chain of Gold, as heavy as the chain of Iron that was upon him in prison ; And will not Christ richly reward all his suffering Saints? Surely he will : Christ will at last pay a Christian for every prayer he hath made, for every Sermon he hath heard, for every tear he hath shed, for every morsel he hath given, for every burden he hath born, for every battel he hath fought, for every enemy he hath slain, and for every temptation that he hath overcome.

Cyrus in a great expedition against his enemies, the better to encourage his souldiers to fight, in an Oration that he made at the head of his Army, promised upon the victory, to make every Foot-souldier a Horse-man, & every Horse-man a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, should be unrewarded ; but what are Cyrus his rewards, to the rewards that Christ our General promises to his? *Rev. 3. 21. To him that overcometh*

Mat. 19. 28

Luk. 22. 30

Mat. 5. 12

vercmette

vercometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. As there is no Lord to Christ, so there is no rewards to Christs, his rewards are the greatest rewards, he gives Kingdoms, Crowns, Thrones, he gives Grace and Glory, *Psalm* 48. 11.

As the King in *Plutarch* said of a groat, it is no Kingly gift, and of a Talent it is no base bribe.

It is said of *Araunah*, that noble *Jebusite*, renowned for his bounty, that he had but a Subjects purse, but a Kings heart: but Jesus Christ hath a Kings purse, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly he gives.

And as Christs rewards are the greatest rewards, so his rewards are the surest rewards; he is faithful that hath promised, *1 Thes.* 5. 24.

Antiochus promised often, but seldom gave (upon which he was called in a way of derision, a great promiser) but Jesus Christ never made any promise, but he hath or will perform it, *2 Cor.* 1. 20. nay, he is often better than his word,

Mat. 9. 2.

2 Chro. 1.
10. to 16.Gen. 28. 20
compared
with Gen.
32. 10.

1 Cor. 2. 9. he gives many times more than we ask. The sick man of the Palsie, asked but health, and Christ gave him health, and a pardon to boot. *Solomon* desired but wisdom, and the Lord gave him wisdom, and honour, and riches, and the favour of Creatures, as Paper and Packthred into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him these things, and riches, and other mercies into the bargain.

Christ doth not measure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own Riches and Mercy. Gracious souls many times receive many gifts and favours from God, that they never dream'd of, nor durst presume to beg, which others extreemly strive after, and go without.

Archelaus being much importuned by a covetous Courtier for a Cup of Gold wherein he drank, gave it unto *Enripides*, that stood by; saying, Thou art worthy to ask

ask and be denyed, but *Enripides* is worthy of gifts, although he ask not.

The Prodigal craves no more but the place of a hired Servant, but he is entertained as a Son, he is clad with the best robe, and fed with the fatted Calf, he hath a Ring for his hand, and Shooes for his feet, rich supplies, more than he desired. *Jacobs* Sons in a time of Famine, desired only Corn, and they return with Corn and Mony in their Sacks, and with good news too, *Joseph* is alive, and Governour of all *Egypt*.

And as his rewards are greater and surer than other rewards, so they are more durable and lasting than others rewards; the Kingdom that he gives, is a Kingdom that shakes not; the treasures that he gives, are treasures that corrupt not; and the glory that he gives, is glory that fadeth not away; but the rewards that men give, are like themselves, fickle and unconstant, they are withering and fading.

E 4

Xerxes

Luke 15.
19---25.

Gen. 42.

Heb. 12. 28
Mat. 6. 19,
20.
1 Pet. 1. 4.

Xerxes Crowned his Steerf-man in the morning, and Beheaded him in the evening of the same day.

And *Andronicus* the Greek Emperor, crowned his Admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the afternoon.

Riffenfis had a Cardinals Hat sent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him. Most may say of their Crowns, as that King said of his, O Crown! more noble than happy. It was a just complaint which long ago was made against the Heathen Gods, (*O faciles dare summa deos, eademque tueri, difficiles!*) they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the possession of them; the world may give you great things, but the world cannot maintain you in the possession of them; but the great things, the great rewards that Christ gives his, he will for ever maintain them in the possession of them, otherwise

Hea.

Heaven would not be Heaven, Glory would not be Glory; now by all these things you see, that it is a very great honour to be an Old Disciple, an Old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you begin to be really good betimes, except in the morning of your Youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth, to our selves.

You see beloved; that it is the great Duty and Concernment of Young Men, *To be really good betimes*: If this be so; Then,

Use I.

First, This Truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such Young Men, that are only seemingly good, that make some shews of goodness, but are not right to-

2 Chro. 24

1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

6, 13, 14,

15, 16.

Nero's first
five years
are famous
but after-
wards who
more cruel

There are
some that
write, that
after *De-
mas* had
forsaken
Paul, he
became a
Priest in
an Idol
Temple.

ward God at the Root.

As *Joash* when he was young, he seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* lived, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buried with him.

Ah! how many in these days that have been seemingly good, have turned to be naught, very naught, yea, stark naught?

It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled, he was no ways tainted in his reputation, and that whilst *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, he feigned those vertues which he had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself. in the hearts of the people; but after he had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controlement, there was no fact in which he was not faulty, no crime to which he was not accessory.

Oh! That this were not applicable to many young persons in these

these days, who have made great shew, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to out-shine the Stars, but are now gone out like so many snuffs, to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the Gospel, the grief of others, and the hazard of their own souls.

It was a custom of old, when any were baptized, the Minister delivered a white Garment to be put on, saying, Take thou this white Vestment, and see thou bring it forth without spot, at the Judgement seat of Jesus Christ, whereupon one *Maritta* Baptizing one *Elpidophorus*, who when he was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, he brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, shakes it against him, saying: This Linnen garment *Elpidophorus*, shall accuse thee at the coming of Christ, which I have kept by me as a witness of thy Apostacy.

Ah! Youngmen and women, your former professions will be a sad witness against you in the

Crabs that go backwards, are reckoned among the unclean creatures.

great

Pro. 14. 14.

great day of our Lord Jesus except you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord.

2 Pet. 1. 21

Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousness, than after you have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment?

Cyprian in his Sermon *de lapsis*, reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and dyed fearfully.

Jer. 17. 13

Oh the delusions, and the Christ-dethroning, Conscience-wasting, and Soul-undoing Opinions, and principles, that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture seems to be made good in power upon them: *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to be ashamed; and they that depart from him, shall be written upon the dust; to begin well, and not to proceed, is*
but

but to aspire to a higher pitch, that the fall may be the more desperate. Backsliding is a wounding sin. You read of no arms for the back, though you do for the breast: He that is but seemingly good, will prove at last exceeding bad, 2 Tim. 3. 13. *They wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

The Wolf, though he often dissembles, and closely hides his nature, yet he will one time or other shew himself to be a Wolf.

In the days of *Hadrian* the Emperour, there was one *Bencosby* who gathering a multitude of Jews together; called himself *Ben-cocuba*, the Son of a Star, applying that prophesie to himself, *Numb. 23. 17.* but his mask was taken off, his Hypocrisie discovered, and he found, to be *barchosaba*, the Son of a Lye; this age hath afforded many such Monsters, but their folly is discovered, and their practices abhorred. This was the Young mans commendation in the Text, *That there was found in him some real good*

Hos. 4. 14.
Eph. 6. 11;
18.

Comets
make a
greater
blaze than
fixed Stars

good towards the Lord.

Use II.

Secondly, This truth looks sorrowfully and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities, that are dishonouring, provoking & displeasing to the Lord; who roar, and revel, and gad, and game, and dice, and drink, & drab; and what not? these make work with a witness for Repentance, or Hell, or the Physitian of souls.

I shall but touch upon the evil of youth, and then come to that which is mostly intended.

CHAP. III.

The first evil that most properly attends Youth, is Pride.

Pride of heart, Pride of apparel, Pride of parts; young men are apt

Tim. 3.6

to

to be proud of health, strength, friends, relations, wit, wealth, wisdom : two things are very rare, the one is to see a Young man humble and watchful, and the other to see an Old man contented and chearful.

Bernard saith, that pride is the Rich mans couzen, and experience every day speaks out pride to be the Young mans couzen. God (said one) had three Sons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Christ*, the first aspired to be like God in Power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven : The second to be like him in knowledge, and was therefore deservedly driven out of *Eden*, when young : the third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodness, mercy, and humility, and by so doing, obtained an everlasting inheritance.

Remember this, young men, and as you would get a Paradise, and keep a Paradise, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of evil

Pride cannot climb so high, but justice will sit above,

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though he were a Dwarf, yet would be pictured tall of stature.

Psaphon, a proud *Lybian*, would needs be a God, and having caught some birds, he taught them to speak and prattle, The great God *Psaphon*.

Menecrates, a proud Physician, wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a God, to *Philip* a King.

Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, he got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simoni*) that there were so many Beggars of his Kin, and set the house on fire wherein he was born, because nobody should point at it.

Wretched evils *Pharaoh's* pride, and *Haman's* pride, and *Herod's* pride, and *Belshazzar's* pride put them upon, I shall not now mention.

Accie an
old woman
seeing her
deformity
in a glass,
went mad,
&c.

Ah Young men! Young men! had others a window to look into your breasts, or did your hearts stand where your faces do, you would even be afraid of yourselves.

selves, you would loath and abhor your selves.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would have God to keep house with you, as you would have his mind and secrets made known to you, as you would have Christ to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, and attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

Tertullian's counsel to the young gallants of those times was excellent, cloath your selves (said he) with the silk of piety, with the satin of sanctity, and with the purple of modesty; So shall you have God himself to be your Suiter.

2. Evil.

The second Evil that youth is subject to, is sensual pleasures and delights. Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.

The wise man by an Ironical confession,

*Text. de
Cult. fam.
cap. 13.*

*Eccl. 11. 9
2 Sam. 13.
23--29.*

*ἡδονὴ
δέλεα-
καίων.
Pleasure is
the habit
of sin, saith
Plato.*

Jud. 14. 10

They were
much out,
that held
pleasure to
be mans
summum
bonum.

cession, bids him rejoyce, &c. Sin
&c. thou art wilful, & resolved up-
on taking thy pleasure, go on, take
thy course: this he speaks by way of
mockage and bitter scoff, &c. but
know thou, that for all these things
God will bring thee into Judge-
ment. So *Sampson* made a feast; for
so used the young men to do, the
hearts of young men usually are
much given up to pleasure. I have
read of a young man, who was ve-
ry much given up to pleasures, he
standing by *St. Ambrose*, and see-
ing his excellent death, turned to
other young men by him and said:

Oh! that I might live with you,
and dye with him. Sensual plea-
sures are like to those Locusts, *Rev.*
9. 7. the crowns upon whose heads
are said to be only as it were such
or such in appearance, and like
gold, but *ver. 10.* it is said, there
were (not as it were, but) stings in
their tails.

Sensual pleasures are but seem-
ing, and appearing pleasures, but
the pains that attend them are
true

true and real; he that delights in sensual pleasures, shall find his greatest pleasures, become his bitterest pains.

The Heathens looked upon the back parts of pleasure, and saw it going away from them, and leaving a sting behind.

Pleasures pass away as soon as they have wearied out the body, and leave it as a bunch of grapes, whose juice hath been pressed out; which made one to say (*Nulla major voluptas, quam voluptatis fastidium*) I see no greater pleasure in this world, than the contempt of pleasure.

Julian, though an Apostate, yet professed, that the pleasures of the body were far below a great spirit. And *Tully* saith, he is not worthy of the name of a man (*qui unum diem velit esse in voluptate*) that would entirely spend one whole day in pleasures; it is better not to desire pleasures, than to enjoy them. I said of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what dost

Eccl. 2. 2.

dost thou? the interrogation bids a challenge to all the Masters of mirth, to produce any one satisfactory fruit which it affordeth, if they could.

Xerxes being weary of all pleasures, promised rewards to the inventors of new pleasures, which being invented, he nevertheless remained unsatisfied. As a Bee flies from flower to flower, and is not satisfied, and as a sick man removes from one bed to another, from one seat to another, from one Chamber to another, for ease, and finds none: So men given up to sensual pleasures, go from one pleasure to another, but can find no content, no satisfaction in their pleasures. *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* There is a curse of unsatisfiability lies upon the creature; honours cannot satisfy the ambitious man, nor riches the covetous man, nor pleasures the voluptuous man; man cannot take off the weariness of one pleasure,

Eccl. 1: 8.

by

by another, for after a few evaporated minutes are spent in pleasures, the body presently fails the mind, and the mind the desire, and the desire the satisfaction, and all the man.

Pleasures are *Junes* in the pursuit, and but clouds in the enjoyment; Pleasure is a beautiful Harlot, sitting in her Chariot, whose four wheels are Pride, Gluttony, Lust, and Idleness; the two Horses are Prosperity and Abundance; the two Drivers are, Idleness and Security, her Attendants and Followers are Guilt, Grief, late Repentance (many) and oft Death and Ruine; many great men, and many strong men, and many rich men, and many hopeful men, and many young men, have come to their ends by her, but never any enjoyed full satisfaction and content in her.

Ah! Young men, Young men, avoid this Harlot, and come not near the door of her house. And as for lawful pleasures, let me only say this, 'tis your wisdom only

Because saith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is sweet, but in the end it breeds *Choler*, so do worldly pleasures.

only to touch them, to taste them and to use them, as *Mithridates* used poyson; to fortifie your selves against casual extremities, and maladies: When Mr. *Roger Ascham* asked the Lady *Jane Gray*, how she could lose such pastime, her father with the Dutchess, being a Hunting in the Park; smilingly answered, all sport in the Park is but a shadow of that pleasure I find in this Book, having a good Book in her hand.

Augustine before his conversion, could not tell how to live without those pleasures which he delighted much in, but when his nature was changed, and his heart graciously turned to the Lord, O how sweet (saith he) is it to be without those former sweet delights!

Ah! Young men, when once you come to experience the goodness and sweetness that is in the Lord, and in his Word and Ways, you will then sit down and grieve, that you have spent more Wine in the Cup, than Oil in the Lamp.

There

There are no pleasures so delighting, so satisfying, so ravishing, so ingaging, and so abiding, as those that spring from union, and communion with God, as those that flow from a sense of Interest in God, and from an humble, and a holy walking with God.

3. Evil.

The third sin of Youth is rashness.

They many times know little, and fear less, and so are apt rashly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazard. *Exhort Young men to be sober minded, or discreet.* They are apt to be rash, to be hot-spurs: As you may see in *Rehoboam's* Young Counsellors, who counselled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthen) that his little finger should be thicker than his Fathers loins, and that he would add to their yolk, and that where-

*Arist.
Polit.*

Tit. 2. 6.

*1 King. 12.
8, 9 10, 11.*

1 Sam 25.

34, 35.

Dis proximus ille est, quem ratio, non ira, movet.

Sen. He is next to God, whom reason, not anger moveth.

whereas his Father had chastised them with Whips, he would chastise them with Scorpions, this rash counsel proved *Rehoboam's* ruine: yea, *David* himself though a good man, yet being in his warm blood and young, how sadly was he overtaken with rashness? As the Lord God of Israel liveth (saith he) except thou hadst hastned, and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto *Nabal*, by to morrow light, any that pisseth against the Wall. And thus he binds with an Oath; because the Master was foolishly wilful, the innocent servants must all be woful, and because *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would be prodigal of his blood.

Ah! how unlike a Christian, yea, how below a man, doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up, and he a captive to rashness, and passion? Rashness will admit of naught. for Reason, but what unreasonable self shall disstate for reason; as sloth selfdom

dom bringeth actions to good birth, so rashness makes them always abortive, e're well formed: A rash spirit is an ungodlike spirit: a rash spirit is a weak spirit, it is an effeminate spirit. *A man of understanding, is of an excellent spirit, or as the Hebrew will bear, is of a cool spirit, not rash and hot, ready at every turn to put out his soul in wrath. Rashness unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below man-hood. Herostratus (a hotspur) an obscure base fellow, did in one night by fire destroy the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, which was two hundred and twenty years in building of all Asia, at the cost of so many Princes, and beautified with the labours and cunning of so many excellent workmen; the truth is, there would be no end, should I discover the many sad and great evils that are ushered into the world by that one evil rashness, which usually attends youth, &c, and therefore young men decline it, and arm your selves against it, &c.*

Pro. 17. 27

F

4 Evil

4. Evil.

The fourth sin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking and scoffing at religious men, and religious things.

2 King. 2.
23, 24.

Job 30. 1,
12, 13, 14,
15.

They were young ones, that scoffingly and scornfully said to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head go up thou bald-head.* And the young men derided and mocked, **Job.** But now, they that are younger than I, have me in derision; whose Fathers I would have disdained, to have set with the Dogs of my Flock. Upon my right hand rise the youth, they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction, &c. And oh that this age did not afford many such Monsters, who are notable, who are infamous in this black Art of scoffing and deriding the people God, and the ways of God.

The Athenians once scoffed at Sylla's wife, and it had well nigh cost the razing of their City, was

was so provoked with the indignity, and will you think it safe to scoff at the people of God, who are the Spouse of Christ, who are as the Apple of his eye, who are the signet on his right hand, his portion, his pleasant portion, his inheritance, his Jewel, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men! will you seriously consider how sadly and sorely he hath punished other scoffers and mockers? and by his Judgments on them, be warned never to scoff at the people of God, or his ways more. *Julian* the Emperour was a great scoffer of Christians, but at last he was struck with an Arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*Vicisti Galilee*) thou *Galilean* (meaning our Saviour Christ) hast overcome me. *Felix*, for one malicious scoff, did nothing day and night but vomit bloud, till his unhappy soul was separated from his wretched body. *Percydes* was consumed by Worms alive, for giving

Rev. 2. 1.
Zech. 5.
Deut. 32. 9
Isa. 19. 25
Joel 2. 17.
Ps. 33. 12
Isa. 26. 3.

Religion but a nick-name. *Lucian* for barking against Religion like a Dog, was by the just Judgment of God devoured by Dogs. Remember these dreadful judgments of God on scoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, scoff on, but know, that justice will at last be even with you, nay above you.

5 Evil.

The fifth and last evil (that I shall mention) that attends and waits on youth, is lustfulness, and wantonness.

2 Tim. 2. 11

Which occasioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful lusts. *Timothy* was a chaste and chastened piece; he was much sanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low; he walked up and down this World with dying thoughts, and with a weak, distempered, declining, dying body; his heart was in Heaven, and his foot in the Grave, and yet Youth is such a slippery age, that *Paul* commands him to flee

flee, to post from youthful lusts; though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak sickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking water rather than wine, yet he was but a man, yea, a young man; and therefore *Paul's* counsel and command is, that he flee youthful lusts. And *Solomon* who had sadly experienced the slipperiness of youth, gives this counsel, *Put away the evils of thy flesh, for child-hood and youth are vanity.* He was a young man that followed the Harlot to her house: he was young in years and young in knowledge; (*Salazer* upon the words saith) that was a happy age, that afforded but one simple young man among many, whereas late times afford greater store. Ah! too many of the youths of this age, instead of flying from youthful lusts, they post and pursue after youthful lusts.

Chrysostom speaking of youth, saith, it is (*difficilem, jactabilem, fallibilem, vehementissimisque egentem frænis*). hard to be ruled, easie to

Eccl. i. 10.

Prov. 7. 7. 8. 9. 6.

Chrysost. Homil. 1. Ad populum.

be drawn away, apt to be deceived, and standing in need of very violent reins.

Lapide.

The Ancients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a veil over his face, his right hand bound behind him, his left hand loose, and time behind him, pulling one thread out of his veil every day, intimating that young men are void of knowledge, and blind, unfit to do good, ready to do evil, till time by little and little make them wiser. Well young man remember this, that the least sparklings and kindling of lusts, will first or last cost thee groans, and griefs, tears, and terrours enough. These five are the sins that usually are waiting and attending on youth, but from these the young man in the Text was by Grace preserved and secured, which is more than I dare affirm of all, into whose hand this Treatise shall fall. But though these five are the sins of youth; yet they are not all the sins of youth, for youth

youth is capable of, and subject to all other sins whatsoever, but these are the special sins that most usually waits and attends on young men, when they are in the spring and morning of their youth.

CHAP. IV.

I shall now hasten to the main Use that I do intend to stand upon, and that is a Use of Exhortation, to all young persons.

Ah Sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Christian friends, and the salvation of your own souls; be exhorted and perswaded to be really good betimes. It was the praise and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him some good thing towards the Lord in the Primrose of his child-hood.

Oh that it might be your honour and happiness to be really good betimes, that it might be to you a praise, and a Name, that in the

Other sins attend youth, as

1. Ignorance

1 Cor. 14. 20.

2 Falshood
Plal. 50. 3

3. Excessive love of liberty

4. Impatience of Councils

and reproofs, Jer 31. 18, 19.

5. Impudence,
Isa. 3. 5.

6. Arrising spirits, Eccles.

11. 10.

7. Prodigality.
Use.

morning of your youth, you have begun to seek the Lord, and to know and love the Lord, and to get an interest and propriety in the Lord: Now that this Exhortation may stick and take.

I beseech you seriously to weigh and ponder these following Motives, or Considerations.

I Motive.

First consider, *It is an honour to be good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning Star; he is like a Pearl in a Gold Ring. It is mentioned as a singular honour to the believing *Jews*, that they first trusted in Christ; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ; this was their praise, their crown, that they were first converted, and turned to Christ and Christianity. So St. Paul mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumstance of praise and honour, that they were in Christ before him. Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my Kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners

Eph. I. 12.

Rom. 16. 7.

ners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

And so it was the honour of the house of *Stephanus*, that they were the first fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory, that they were the first that received, and welcomed the Gospel in *Achaia*. 'Tis a greater honour for a young man to outwrestle Sin, Satan, Temptation, he World and Lust, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praise and honour, that they were the first in fetching home *David* their King.

1 Cor. 16
15.

2 Sam. 19.
15.

Ah! Young men, and women, it will be your eternal praise and honour, if you shall be before others, if you shall be the first among many, who shall know the Lord, and seek the Lord, who shall receive the Lord, and embrace him; who shall cleave to the Lord, and serve him; who shall honour the Lord, and obey him; who shall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. * The *Romans* built

Judg. 1. 7.

Dan. 4. 28.

Act. 12. 23.

Esth. 7. 10.

Vertues and Honours Temple close together, to shew, that the way to honour was by virtue; and indeed there is no Crown to that which goodness sets upon a mans head; all other honour is fading and withering. *Adonibezek*, a mighty Prince is suddenly made fellow-commoner with the Dogs. And *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mighty Conquerour, turned a grazing among the Oxen. And *Herod* reduced from a conceited God, to be the most loathsome of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures, upon the suit of his affronted Creator. And *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next: I might tell you of *Badjazet*, and *Bellisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others, who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honour and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time; But that honour that arises from mens being

ing gracious betimes, is such honour, that the world can neither give nor take; it is honour, it is a Crown that will still be green, and flourishing, it is honour that will bed and board with a man, that will abide with a man under all trials and changes, that will to the grave, that will to heaven with a man.

Ah Sirs! It is no small honour to you, who are in the spring and morning of your days, that the Lord hath left upon record several instances of his love and delight in Young men; he chose *David* a younger Brother, and passes by his elder Brothers: he frowns upon *Esau*, and passes by his door, and sets his love and delight upon *Jacob* the younger brother; he kindly and lovingly accepts of *Abel's* person and sacrifice. and rejects both *Cain's* person and sacrifice, though he was the elder Brother. Among all the Disciples, *John* was the youngest, and the most and best beloved. There

was

Sam. 16.

11, 12, 13.

Rom. 9, 12.

13.

Gen. 4, 26.

4, 7, 6.

Joh. 13, 13.

Mark 10.
19, 20, 21.

ἀγαπᾷν.

was but one young man that came to Christ, and he came not aright; and all the good that was in him, was but some moral good, and yet Christ loved him, with a love of pity and compassion; the Greek word signifies, to speak friendly, and deal gently with one; and so did Christ with him, all which should exceedingly encourage young men to be good betimes, to be gracious in the morning of their youth; no way to true honour like this, but

The sacrifices in the Law were young Lambs, and young Kids, to shew, that Christ our Sacrifice should die and suffer for our sins, in the flower of his age.

2 Motive.

Secondly, consider, *Christ loved poor sinners, and gave himself for them, when he was in the prime of his age* (being supposed to be about thirty and three) *and will you put him off with the worst of your time?*

Ah! young men, young men, Christ gave himself up to death, he made himself an offering for your sins, for your sakes, when he was in the prime and flower of his age, and why then should you put off Christ

Christ to old age? Did he die for sin in the prime of his age? and will not you dye to sin in the prime of your age? Did he offer himself for you in the spring, and morning of his years? and will not you offer up your selves to him in the spring and morning of your years? O give not Christ cause to say, I dyed for you betimes, but you have not lived to me betimes; I was early in my sufferings for you, but you have not been early in your returning to me; I made haste to compleat your Redemption, but you have made no haste to make sure your Vocation, and Election; I stayed not, I lingred not, but soon suffered what I was to suffer, and quickly did what was to be done for your eternal welfare, but you have stayed, and lingred (like *Lot in Sodom*) and have not done what you might have done in order to your everlasting good; in the Primrose of my days I sweat for you,

Rom. 12.
1. 2.

2 Pet. 1. 10

Gen. 19. 16

Zech. 12.
10.

you, I wept for you, I bled for you, I hung upon the Cross for you, I bore the wrath of my Father for you, but you have not in the Primrose of your days, sweat under the sense of Divine displeasure, nor wept over your sins, nor mourned over me, whom you have so often grieved and pierced; I could not be quiet nor satisfied till I had put you into a capacity, into a possibility of salvation, and yet you are well enough quieted and satisfied, though you do not know whether ever you shall be saved.

Ah Sirs! how sad would it be with you, if Jesus Christ should secretly thus exhortate with your conscience in this your day.

2 Cor. 4.
3, 4.

Oh! how terrible would it be with you, if Christ should thus visibly plead against you in his great day. Ah! Young men, young men, and women, who but souls much left of God, blinded by Satan, and hardened in sin, can hear Jesus Christ speaking.

ing thus to them ? I suffered for Sinners betimes, I laid down a ranfome for Souls betimes, I pacified my Fathers Wrath betimes, I fatisfied my Fathers Juftice betimes, I merited grace and mercy for finners betimes, I brought in an everlafting righteoufnefs upon the world betimes, &c. I fay, who can hear Jesus Chrift fpeaking thus, and his heart not fall in love and league with Chrift, and his foul not unite to Chrift, and resign to Chrift, and cleave to Chrift, and for ever be one with Chrift except it be fuch that are for ever left by Chrift ? Well, remember this, (*quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior*) the more vile Chrift made himfelf for us, the more dear he ought to be unto us.

Ah ! Young men, remember this, when Chrift was young, he was tempted and tryed, when he was in the morning of his days, his wounds were deep, his burden weighty, his cup bitter, his sweat pain-

Nolo vivere sine vulnere, cum te video vulneratum. Bonaventura. Oh my God, as long as I see thy wounds, I will never live without wounds. Aut Deus naturæ patitur aut mundi machina dissolvitur, said Dionysius Alexandrinus. Either the God of nature suffered, or the frame of the world will be dissolved.

painful, his agony and torment, above conception, beyond expression; when he was young, that blessed head of his was crowned with thorns, and those eyes of his that were purer than the Sun, were put out by the darkness of Death; and those ears of his which now hear nothing but *Hallelujahs* of Saints and Angels, were filled with the blasphemies of the multitude; and that blessed beautiful face of his, which was fairer than the Sons of men, was spit on by beastly filthy wretches; and that gracious mouth and tongue, that spake as never man spake, was slandered and accused of blasphemy; and those hands of his which healed the Sick, which gave out pardons, which swayed a Scepter in Heaven, and another on Earth, were nailed to the Cross; and those feet that were beautiful upon the Mountains, that brought the glad tidings of Peace and Salvation into the World, and that were like unto

fine

fine brass, were also nailed to the Cross: All these great and sad things did Jesus Christ suffer for you, in the prime and flower of his days; and On! what an unspeakable Provocation should this be to all young ones, to give up themselves betimes to Christ, to serve, love, honour, and obey him betimes, even in the spring and morning of their youth?

Let the thoughts of a crucified Christ (said one) be never out of your mind; let them be meat and drink unto you, let them be your sweetness and consolation, your honey, and your desire, your reading, and your meditation, your life, death, and resurrection.

3 Motive.

The third Motive or consideration to provoke you to begin to be good betimes, is this, *Viz.*

That it is the best and choicest way in the world, to be rich in gracious experiences betimes (which are

The Philosopher once said, *solus sapiens dives*, only the wise man is the rich man.

are the best riches in all the world) as he that sets up for himself betimes, is in the most hopeful way to be rich betimes: So he that is good in good earnest betimes, he is in the ready way, the high-way of being rich in grace, and rich in goodness, they usually prove men of great observation, and great experience. God loves to shew these his beauty, and his glory in his Sanctuary. He delights to cause his glory, and his goodness to pass before such: these shall find all his paths, drop marrow and fatness, for these the Lord of Hosts will make a feast of fat things, a feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined; these shall have all manner of pleasant fruits laid up at their gates for their well beloved; none have so many choice pledges of Christs love, nor so many sweet kisses of Christs mouth, nor so many imbraces in Christs arms, as those souls that are good betimes:

Pf. 63 1, 2.

Exod. 3. 3,

19, 22, & c

Pf. 65. 11,

12.

Isa. 25. 6.

Cant. 7. 13

betimes : O the grace, the good
 ness, the sweetness, the fatness
 that Christ is still a dropping into
 their hearts ! Christ will make
 their hearts his largest treasury ,
 he'll lay up most of his heavenly
 treasure in their souls, there he
 will store up mercies new and
 old ; there he will treasure up all
 plenty, rarity, and variety, there
 he will lay up all that heart can
 wish or need require : O the
 many drops of Myrrhe that falls
 from Christs fingers upon their
 hearts ! O the many secrets
 that Christ reveals in their ears !
 O the many Love-letters that
 Christ sends to these ! O the ma-
 ny visits that he gives to these !
 O the turns, the walks that he
 hath in Paradise with these ! there
 are none in the world for experi-
 ence, and intelligence to these.
 Ah ! Young men, young men,
 as you would be rich in the best
 riches , begin to be good be-
 times as there is no riches to
 spiritual riches, so there is no
 way

Earthly
 riches are
 full of po-
 verty.

*Divitie
 corporales
 paupertatis
 plena sunt.*

way to be rich in these riches, but by beginning to be good (in good earnest) betimes.

If there were any happiness in riches, the Gods would not want them saith Seneca,

As for worldly riches, Philosophers have contemned them, and preferred a contemplative life above them, and shall not Christians much more; the Prophet calls them *thick clay*, which will sooner break the back, than lighten the heart; they cannot better the soul, they cannot enrich the soul. Ah! how many thread-bare souls are to be found under silken cloaks and gowns? how often are worldly Riches, like hang-men, they hide mens faces with a covering, that they may not see their own end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will shortly leave you, they make themselves wings and fly away; when one was commending the Riches and Wealth of Merchants; I do not love that wealth, said a Heathen, that hangs upon Ropes, if they break, the Ship miscarryeth and

and all is lost. He is rich enough (saith St. Jerome) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity, that is not forced to serve.

*This worlds wealth that men so much desire,
May well be likened to a burning fire,
Whereof a little can do little harm,
But profit much our bodies well to warm :
But take too much, and surely thou shalt burn,
So too much wealth, to too much woe does
(turn.*

It was an excellent saying of Lewis of Bayrer, Emperour of Germany (*huiusmodi comparanda sunt opes, quæ cum naufragio simul erant*) such goods are worth getting and owning, as will not sink or wash away, if a Shipwrack happen, but will wade and swim out with us; we see such are the spiritual riches that will attend those, who in the spring and morning of their youth, shall know the Lord, and serve the Lord, and get an interest in the Lord; and thus much for the third Motive.

The

4 Motive.

The fourth Motive to provoke young ones to be really good betimes, is to consider, that *The present time, the present day is the only season that you are sure of.*

Heb. 3. 15.

2 Cor. 6. 2
The whole
Earth
hangs on a
point, to
doth Hea-
ven and
Eternity
on an inch
of oppor-
tunity.

Time past cannot be recalled, and time to come cannot be ascertained. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; some there be that trifle away their time, and fool away their souls, and their salvation; to prevent this, the Apostle beats upon the *Tò vñ*, the present opportunity, because, if that be once past, there is no recovering of it; therefore as the Mariner takes the first fair wind to sail; and as the Merchant takes his first opportunity of buying and selling: and as the Husbandman takes the first opportunity of sowing and reaping; so should young men take the present season, the present day (which is their day) to be good towards

the

the Lord, to seek him, and serve him, and not to post off the present season, for they know not what another day, another hour, another moment may bring forth : that Door of Grace that is open to day, may be shut to morrow : that golden Scepter of mercy that is held forth in the Gospel this day, may be taken in the next day ; that love that this hour is upon the bare knee, intreating and beseeching young men to break off their sins by repentance, to return to the Lord, to lay hold on his strength, and be at peace with him, may the next hour be turned into wrath.

Isa. 27. 45

Ah ! the noble motions that have been lost, the good purposes that have withered, the immortal souls that have miscarried, by putting off the present season, the present day. *St. Paul* discoursing before *Felix* of Righteousness, and Temperance, and Judgment to come, and in this discourse striking at two special

Act. 24. 25

vices

vices that *Felix* was particularly guilty of, he falls a trembling; and being upon the wrack to hear such Doctrine, he bids Saint *Paul* depart for that time, and he would call for him at a convenient season; here *Felix* neglects his present season, and we never read that ever after this, he found a convenient time or season to hear St. *Paul* make an end of the subject he had begun! So Christ made a very fair offer to the Young man in the Gospel, *Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven*; here Christ offers heavenly treasures, for earthly treasures; unmixed treasures, for mixed treasures; perfect treasures, for imperfect treasures; satisfying treasures, for unsatisfying treasures; lasting treasures, for fading treasures; but the young man slips his opportunity, his season, and goes away sorrowful, and we never read more of him.

Ah! Young men, young men

Mark 11.
22, 23, 24.

do not put off the present season, do not neglect the present day; there is no time yours, but the present time; no day yours, but the present day; and therefore do not please your selves, and feed your selves with hopes of time to come, and that you will repent, but not yet; and lay hold on mercy, but not yet; and give up your selves to the Lord next week, next month, or next year; for that God that hath promised you mercy and favour, upon the day of your return, he hath not promised to prolong your lives, till that day comes; when a Souldier was brought before *Lamachus*, a Commander, for a mis-behaviour, and pleaded he would do so no more, *Lamachus* answered (*non licet in bello bis peccare*) no man must offend twice in War: So God (especially in these Gospel-days, wherein the motions of Divine Justice are more smart and quick, than in former days) haply will not

Often consider what the damned would give (were it in their hands) for one season of Grace, for one opportunity of Mercy.

Heb. 3. 2.

suffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, and let slip the season of mercy.

Ah! Young men; young men, you say you will be good towards the Lord before you die, but if you are not good towards the Lord to day, you may die to morrow; nay, justice may leave him to be his own executioner to morrow, who will not repent, nor seek the Lord to day. I have read of a certain young man, who being admonished of the evil of his way and course, and pressed to leave his wickedness, by the consideration of Death, Judgment, and Eternity, which was a coming, he answered, what do you tell me of these things, I will do well enough, for when Death comes, I will speak but three words, and will help all; and so still he went on in his sinful ways, but in the end coming to a bridge on Horse-back, to go over a deep water, the Horse stumbling, and he labouring to recover his Horse,

but

but could not, at last he lets go the bridle, and gave up himself and Horse to the waters, and was heard to say these three words, *Devil take all.* Here was three dreadful words indeed, and an example (with a witness) for all young men to beware, who think to repent with a three-word repentance at last.

*Diabolus
capit om-
nia.*

Otho, the Emperour, flew himself with his own hands, but slept so soundly the night before, that the Grooms of his Chamber heard him snort.

Young men, I will suppose you to be good accountants; now if you please to count the number, and mark the age of the Sacrifices in the Old Testament, and you shall find more Kids, and Lambs offered, than Goats, and old Sheep: You have no lease of your lives, you are not sure that you shall live to *Isaac's* age, to live till your eyes wax dim; you are not sure that you shall live to *Jacob's* years, and die, leaning up-

*Plur arch
reporteth
the like of
Cato.*

Gen 27.1.

Heb. 11.24

Job 36.14

As out of
the boughs
of a tree
are taken
wedges to
cleave it in
pieces, so
out of our
own lusts,
Satan
works En-
gines to
destroy us.

on the top of a staff. You read of them who dye in their youth, and whose lives are among the unclean. Slip not the present season, neglect not this day of grace, let not Satan keep your souls and Christ any longer asunder, by telling of you, that you are too young, that hereafter will be time enough. St. *Anstsin* tells us, that by this very temptation, the Devil kept him off from receiving of Christ, from closing with Christ, seven years together; he could no sooner think of inquiring after Christ, of getting an interest in Christ, of leaving off his sinful courses, &c. but Satan would be still a suggesting, thou art too young to leave thy drunkenness, thou art too young to leave thy *Dalilahs*, to leave thy Harlots, till at last he cryed out, how long shall I say, it is too soon? Why may I not repent to day? and lay hold on Jesus Christ to day? &c. All young men! this is your day
thus

this is your season, if you will not now hearken and obey, you may perish for ever. *Caesar* had a Letter given him by *Artemidorus*, that morning he went to the Senate, wherein notice was given him of all the conspiracy of his murtherers; so that with ease he might have prevented his death, but neglecting the reading of it was slain, he slipt his season, and dyes for it. Ah! how many for slipping gracious seasons and opportunities, have dyed for ever? Soul opportunities are more worth than a thousand Worlds; mercy is in them, grace and glory is in them, Heaven and Eternity is in them.

5 Motive.

Fifthly, To provoke you to be good betimes; Consider

How just it is with God to reserve the dregs of his wrath for them, who reserve the dregs of their days for him.

How can a Husband embrace that Wife in her old age, who hath spent all the time of her youth in following after strangers? Will any man receive such into his service, who have all their days served his enemies, and received such wounds, blows, and bruises, that renders them unfit for his service?

Deut. 32. 6

*Mult. sc.
nem c. r.
c. r. v. s. i.
u. r. i. n. c. o. m.
m. a. d. a. H. o.
r. a. t. i. u. s.*

Many are the inconveniencies that do encompass an old man.

Ah! Young men, young men, *do not thus foolishly and unwisely requite the Lord*, for all his patient waiting, his gracious wooing, and his merciful dealing with you. Ah! do not put off God to old age, for old, lame, and sick Sacrifices, rarely reach as high as Heaven. Is not old age very unteachable; in old age are not men very unapt to take in, and as unapt to give out? In old age (oftentimes) men are men, and no men, they have eyes, but see not; ears, but hear not; tongues, but speak not; feet, but walk not. An aged man is but a moving Anatomy, or a living mortuary; now how unlovely, how uncomely, how unworthy,

unworthy, nay, how incensing, how provoking a thing must this needs be, when men will dally with God, and put him off till their doting days have overtaken them, till their spring is past, their summer over-past, and they arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea till winter-colours have stained their heads with gray and hoary hairs? How provoking this is, you may see in those sad words of *Jeremiah*, *Jer. 22. 21, 22.* *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity, but thou saidst, I will not hear; this hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyest not my voice: But will God put up this at their hands? no, therefore it follows in the next verse, Surely thou shalt be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.*

Oh that young men would let this Scripture lie warm every morning upon their hearts, that so they may not dare to put off God, and provoke him to their own confusion! though you are young, and in your strength,

The reproach of the evil of wickedness is not to be added to old age. (*Solct enim senectus esse deformis, infirma, obliuiosa, edentula, lucrosa, indocilis & molesta*) saith *Plutarch*, in *Aporhegm.* *Rem. o:* old age useth to be deformed, weak, forgetful, toothless, covetous, unreach-able, unquiet.

yet are you stronger than God? can you make your party good with him? if you must needs be a provoking, provoke them that are your matches, and do not contend with him that is mightier than you, that can command you into nothing, or into Hell at pleasure.

6 Motive.

Sixthly, Consider, *That the sooner you are good on earth, the greater will your reward be in Heaven.*

The sooner you are gracious, the more at last you will be glorious. You read in the Scripture of a reward, of a great reward, and of a full reward; now, *those that are good betimes*, that know, seek, serve, and love the Lord, in the spring and morning of their youth, they are in the fairest way of gaining the greatest, and the fullest reward.

And this I shall make clear, by that which follows.

First, the sooner any man begins to be really good, the mor

Pf. 58. 11.

Gen. 15. 1.

Pf. 19. 11.

Mat. 5. 12.

Heb. 10. 35

Joh. 2. 8.

more good he will do in this World. Now the more good any man doth on earth, the more glory he shall have in Heaven. Therefore my beloved Brethren. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

1 Cor. 13.
58.

Mans wages, mans reward, shall be according to his works; he that doth most work here, shall have most reward hereafter.

God will at last proportion the one to the other, the reward to the work; *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* Though no man shall be rewarded for his works, yet God will at last measure out happiness and blessedness to his people, according to their service, faithfulness, diligence, and work in this world. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full; glory is nothing else but a right constellation of graces,

2 Cor. 9.

Rom 2. 5,
6, 7.

G s

hap-

happiness, nothing but the quintessence of holiness. Grace and Glory differ (*non specie, sed gradu*) in degree, not kind, as the learned speak. Grace and Glory differ very little, the one is the seed, the other is the flower; Grace is Glory militant, and Glory is Grace triumphant; and a man may as well plead for equal degrees of Grace in this World, as he may plead for equal degrees of Glory in the other World. Surely the more grace here, the more glory hereafter, and the more work Christians do on earth, the more glory they shall have in Heaven; and the sooner men begin to be good, the more good they will do in this world; and the more they do here, the more they shall have hereafter. Philosophers seem to weigh our virtues with our vices, and according to the preponderation of either, denominate us good or bad, and so deliver us up to reward or punishment.

No man can commend good Works magnificently enough (saith *Luther*) for one work of a Christian is more precious than Heaven and Earth; and therefore all the world cannot sufficiently reward one good work. And in another place saith the same Authour, if I might have my desire, I would rather chuse the meanest work of a Country Christian (or poor maid) than all the victories and triumphs of *Alexander* the Great, and of *Julius Caesar*.

And again, Whatsoever the Saints do, though never so small and mean, it is great and glorious, because they do all in Faith, and by the Word, saith the same Authour. To prevent mistakes, you must remember, that the works that *Jesus Christ* will reward at last, are supernatural works: they are 1 Works of God. 2 Wrought from God. 3 For God. 4 In God. 5 According to God, they are works that flow from supernatural Principles, and they

David
made use
of his bow,
but did
not trust to
his bow.
The Dove
made use
of her
wings, but
did not
trust in
her wings,
but in the
Ark.

they are directed to supernatural ends, and performed in a supernatural way; now the sooner a man begins to be good, the more he will abound in these good works, and the more doubtless any man abounds in such good works on earth, the greater reward he shall have in Heaven; yet it must not be forgotten, that the best actions, the best works of Hypocrites, and all men out of Christ, are but (*splendida peccata*) fair and shining sins, beautiful abominations. And as the *Phoenix* in *Arabia* gathers sweet odoriferous sticks together, and then blows them with her wings, and burns her self with them: so many a carnal Professor burns himself with his own good works, that is, by his expecting and trusting to receive that by his works, that is only to be received and expected from Jesus Christ. Though all that man can do towards the meriting of Heaven, is no more than the lifting up

of a felstraw towards the meriting of a Kingdom; yet such a proud piece man is, that he is ready enough to say with proud *Vega*, (*Cœlum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven of free cost. A proud heart would fain have that of debt, which is meerly of grace, and desires that to be of purchase, which God hath intended to be of free mercy, which made one to say, that he would swim through a Sea of Brimstone, that he might come to Heaven at the last, but he that swims not thither through the Sea of Christs blood, shall never come there; man must swim thither, not through brimstone, but through blood, or he miscarries for ever.

*Merces non
est debita,
sed gratia
ita.*

Secondly, Again, the sooner a man begins to be good, the more serviceable he will be to others, and the more he will provoke others to good; now all the good that you provoke others to, by Counsel, or Carriage, shall be put

2 Sam. 12.

8, 9.

Isa. 38. 3.

Neh. 13.

14.

Synesius
 speaks of
 some, who
 having a
 treasure of
 rare abili-
 ties in
 them,
 would as
 soon part
 with their
 hearts, as
 their con-
 ceptions;
 but such
 are rather
 monsters
 than men.

put down to your account (as are
 the sins that men provoke o-
 thers to, is put down to their
 accounts: *David* did but send a
 Letter concerning the death of
Uriah, and the charge cometh
Thou hast slain Uriah with the
Sword) the more I stir up others
 to sow, the more at last I shall
 reap; the Sooner a man begins to
 be good, the more good he
 will do, the more serviceable he
 will be in the Town or City
 where he dwells, in the Family
 where he lives among his Rela-
 tions (Wife, Children, Kindred,
 Servants, &c.) with whom he con-
 verses.

The sooner a man begins to
 be gracious, the sooner and the
 more useful will his arts, his
 parts, his gifts, his graces, his mer-
 cies, his experiences, his life, his
 labours, his prayers, his counsels,
 his examples be, to all that are
 with him, to all that are about
 him.

Lilmed Lelammed, we thes y

learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the *Rabbins*. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (saith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many.

Ah! Young men, Young men, as you would be useful and serviceable to many, begin to be good betimes, and to lay in, and lay up, and lay out betimes, for the profit and advantage of others. *Augustine* accounted nothing his own, that he did not communicate to others. The Bee doth store her Hive out of all sorts of Flowers, for the common benefit. 'Tis a base and unworthy spirit, for a man to make himself the centre of all his actions. The very Heathen man could say, that a mans Country, and his Friends, and others, challenge a great part of him: And indeed the best way to do our selves good, is to be a good to others; the best way to gather, is to scatter; Memorable

morable is that story of *Pyrhias*, a Merchant of *Ithaca*, who at Sea espying an aged man a Captive in a Pirates Ship, took compassion of him, and redeemed him; and bought his Commodities which the Pirate had taken from him, which were certain barrels of Pitch. The old men perceiving, that not for any good service he could do him, nor for the gain of that commodity, but meerly out of charity and pity he had done this, discovered a great mass of treasure hidden in the Pitch, whereby the Merchant in a very short time became very rich, at which very time

2 Cor. 9. 6. God made that word good; *He that soweth liberally, shall reap liberally*; and that word, *The liberal soul shall be made fat*; and that word, *The liberal deviseth liberal things*; and by liberal things shall he stand. It is fabled of *Midas*, that what-ever he touched, he turned it into Gold: It is certain, that a liberal hand, a liberal heart turns all into Gold, into gain,

gain, as Scripture and Experience do abundantly evidence: now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to be good betimes, are in the ready way, the high way to be high in Heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth: and therefore young men, as you would be high in Heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to be good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your days.

7 Motive.

The seventh Motive, or Consideration to provoke and incite you to be good betimes, is, *To consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the
g and morning of your youth.*

Go

Jer. 2. 2.

Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, *I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown.*

Exo. 23. 19

Ah! how kindly, how sweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth; while their bones were full of marrow, while they were strong and fit for service, while nature was fresh, lively, and vigorous: In the Law, God called for the first of all things, he required not only the first fruits, but the very first of the first: *The first of the first-fruits of thy Land, Thou shalt bring into the House of the Lord thy God.* God is the first being, the first good, and therefore deserves the first of the first, and the best of the best; the first and the best is not too good for him, who is goodness itself. God, in that of *Levit. 2. 14.* is so passionately set upon having the first of the first, that he will not

'Tis truly said of God, that he is *Omnia super omnia.*

not stay till the green ears of Corn be ripe, but will have the green ears of Corn dried in the fire, lest he should lose his longing.

As many young women, and sickly children, cannot stay till the fruit be ripe, but must have it while it is green; even so saith God, my heart, my desires are so vehemently set upon the first fruits, the first things, that I cannot stay, I cannot satisfy my self without them; and what would God teach us by all this, but to serve him with the first-fruits of our age, the primrose of our Child-hood, the morning of our youth? God hath given you of the best, do not put him off with the worst, with the worst of your time, the worst of your days, the worst of your strength, lest he swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest.

8 Motive.

The eighth Motive or Consideration to provoke you to be
good

Early
Converts
will never
have cause
to say, as
that de-
spairing
Pope said,
the Cross
could do
him no
good, be-
cause he
had so of-
ten sold it
away.

good betimes, to seek and serve
the Lord in the morning of your
youth, is, to consider that *This*
may be a special means to prevent
many black temptations, and an in-
couragement to withstand all tempta-
tions, that you may meet with from
a tempting Devil, and a tempting
World.

An early turning to the Lord,
will prevent many temptations to
despair, many temptations to ne-
glect the means openly, to despise
the means secretly: many tempta-
tions about the being of God, the
goodness, faithfulness, truth and
justice of God; temptations to de-
spair, temptations to lay violent
hands on a mans self; temptations
to question all that God hath said,
and that Christ hath suffered, arri-
ses many times from mens delay-
ing, and putting off God to the
last; all which, with many others
are prevented by a mans seeking
and serving of the Lord in the
spring and morning of his youth.
It is reported of the Harts of *Scy-*

thia

thia, that they teach their young
 oaes to leap from Bank, to Bank,
 from Rock to Rock, from one
 Turf to another (by leaping be-
 fore them) by which means, when
 they are hunted, no beast of prey
 can overtake them ; so when per-
 sons exercise themselves in God-
 liness, when they are young, when
 they leap from one measure of
 holiness to another, when they
 are in the morning of their days ;
 Satan, that mighty Hunter after
 Souls may pursue them with
 his temptations, but he shall
 not overtake them, he shall not
 prevail over them. As you see
 in *Moses*, *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and
 the three Children, these knew
 the Lord, and gave up them-
 selves to the Lord in the prime
 and Primrose of their youth ;
 and these were all temptation-
 proof ; Satan and the World
 pursued them, but could not o-
 vertake them ; when the Devil
 and the World had done their
 worst, the young mens Bows
 abode

Heb. 11.
 Gen. 39,
 Dan. 3. ult.

Gen. 49.
23, 24.

Bernard.
Beza.
Augustin.
Such as
thou art
now, I
was once,
but such as
I am now,
thou wilt
never be,
said *Dio-*
genes to a
base fellow
that told
him, he
had once
been a
forger of
money.

abode in strength, and their hands (to resist) were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Ego non sum Ego*, said that young Convert, when tempted, I am not the man that I was.

Luther tells of a young Virgin, that used to resist all temptations, with this, *Christiana sum*, I am a Christian. Early Converts may say, when tempted, as he, tell me not Satan what I have been, but what I am, and will be; or as he in the like case, whatsoever I was, I am now in Christ, a new Creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or as he, the more desperate my disease was, the more I admire the Physician. Yea, thou mayest yet strain it a peg higher, and say, the greater my sins were, the greater is my honour. As the Devils which once *Mary Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory. When *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabritius* the first day with an Elephant, so huge and monstrous a beast, as before he had not

seen

seen, the next day with money and promises of honour; he answered, I fear not thy force, I am too wise for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be free from the saddest and darkest temptations; and as you would be armed against all temptations, O labour as for life, to be good betimes! seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth; no way like this for the preventing Earth-quakes, Heart-quakes, stormy days, and winter nights, &c.

9 Motive.

The ninth Motive or Consideration to stir up young men to be good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth, is, *To consider the worth and excellency of souls.*

A soul is a spiritual immortal substance, it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of Union with God, of communion

Luk. 23. 13
Mat. 19. 28
Acts 7. ult.

Phil. 1. 23

nion with God, and of a blessed and happy fruition of God.

Heb. 2. 13.

14, 15, 16.

Christ left his Fathers bosom for the good of souls; he assumed mans nature for the salvation of mans Soul, Christ prayed for Souls, he sweat for souls, he wept for souls, he bled for souls, he hung on the Cross for souls, he toad the Wine-press of his Fathers Wrath for souls, he dyed for souls, he rose again from Death for souls, he ascended for souls, he interceeds for souls, and all the glorious preparations that he hath been a making in Heaven these sixteen hundred years, is for souls.

Joh. 14. 1,

2, 3.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not play the Courtier with your precious souls, the Courtier doth all things late, he rises late, dines late, sups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah Sirs! the good of your souls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to be first

first regarded and provided for, and that partly, because it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly, because therein mostly and properly is the Image of God stamp'd, and partly because it is the first converted, and partly because it shall be the first and most glorified.

Ah! young men, young men, if they be worse than Infidels, that make no provision for their Families, what Monsters are they that make not provision for their own souls? this will be bitterness in the end.

Caesar Borgia being sick to death, lamentingly said, when I lived, I provided for every thing but death; now I must dye, and am unprovided to dye; this was a Dart at his heart, and it will at last be a Dagger at yours, who least your bodies, but starve your souls; who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part.

*O anima
Dei insigni-
tate ima-
gine, des-
ponsata fi-
de, donat.
spiritu.
Bera.*

1 Tim. 5. 8.

Jam. 4. 2, 3
Hos. 7. 13,
14.

Callenuccus
relates
this story.

If they deserve a hanging, who
least their Slaves, and starve their
Wives, that make provision for
their enemies, but none for their
friends; how will you escape hang-
ing in Hell, who make provision
for every thing, yea, for your very
lusts, but make no provision for
your immortal souls? We hate the
Turk, for selling Christians for
slaves, and what shall we think then
of those who sell themselves, their
precious souls, for toys and trifles
that cannot profit, who practically
say, what once a prophane Noble
man of *Naples* verbally said, viz.
that he had two souls in his body,
one for God, and another for
whosoever would buy it.

Ah! Young men, young men,
do not pawn your souls, do not
sell your souls, do not exchange a-
way your souls, do not trifle and
fool away your precious souls,
they are Jewels, more worth than
a thousand worlds, yea, than hea-
ven and earth; if they are safe, all
is safe, but if they are lost, all is
lost.

lost, God lost, and Christ lost, and the society of glorious Angels and blessed Saints lost, and Heaven lost, and that for ever. *Granctensis* tells of a Woman that was so affected with souls miscarrying, that she besought God to stop up the passage into Hell with her soul & body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young persons were so affected with the worth and excellency of their souls, and so alarmed with the hazard and danger of losing their souls, as that they may in the spring and morning of their days, enquire after the Lord, and seek him, and serve him with all their might, that so their precious and immortal souls may be safe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the last place,

10 Motive.

Tenthly, Consider, Young men, That God will at last bring you to a reckoning; He will at last

Eccl. 11. 9.

Hierom
still
thought,
that that
noise was
in his ears
(*Surgite
mortui, &
venite ad
judicium*)
arise you
dead, and
come to
judgment.

last bring you to Judgment. Re-
joyce, O young man in thy youth, and
let thy heart cheer thee in the days
of thy youth, and walk in the ways of
thine heart; and in the sight of thine
eyes; but know thou, that for all
these things, God will bring thee
unto Judgment. In these words
you have two things: First, an
Ironical concession, he bids him
rejoyce, &c. he yields him what
he would have by an Irony, by
way of mockage and bitter scoff.
Now thou art young, and strong
lively and lusty, and thy bones
are full of marrow; thou art re-
solved to be proud, and scorn-
ful, to indulge the flesh, and to
follow thy delights and pleasures:
well, take thy course if thou darest,
or if thou hast a mind to it, if
thy heart be so set upon it. Re-
joyce in thy Youth, &c. The Se-
cond is a commination, or a sad
and severe præmonition. But
know thou, that for all these
things, God will bring thee
unto judgment; will bring thee
these

these words import two things; first, the unwillingness of youth to come to Judgment; secondly, the unavoidable necessity that youth must come to Judgment; but how soon you shall be brought to judgment, is only known to God.

St. *Augustine* confesses in one of his Books; that as long as his Conscience was gnawed with the guilt of some youthful lust, he was once ensnared with, the very hearing of a day of Judgment, was even a Hell to him.

Histories tell us of a young man, who being for some Capital offence condemned to dye, grew gray in one nights space, and was therefore pined, and spared.

Ah! Young men, young men, that the serious thoughts of this great day, may put you upon breaking off the sins of your youth; and the dedicating of your selves to the Knowledge, Love, and Service of the Lord, in

the spring and flower of your days. Ah! young men, consider the errors of your lives, the wickedness of your hearts, the sinfulness of your ways, and that strict account that e're long you must be brought to, before the Judge of all the World.

The Heathens themselves had some kind of dread and expectation of such a day; and therefore when St. *Paul* spake of Judgment to come, *Fælix* trembled, though a Heathen.

Act 24. 25

The Philosophers had some dreams of a severe day of account, as appeareth by *Plato's Georgi*, and many passages in *Tully, &c.*

The bringing into Judgment is a thing which is known by reason, and is clear by the light of Nature; wherefore in *Austria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourscore and thirteen years, and had spent all his life in pleasures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour; from hence, saith he, we may conclude, the souls immortality; for if there be a God that

that ruleth this world (as Divines and Philosophers do teach) and that he is just, no one denyeth; surely there are other places to which souls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward or punishment, for here we see, that neither rewards are given to the good, nor punishments to the evil.

*Aneas
Sylvius.*

Ah! Young men, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, and the terror of this day, Oh! that you would be perswaded to flee from the wrath to come; to cast away the Idols of your souls, to repent and be converted in the Primrose of your youth, that your sins may be blot'ted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; or else wo, wo to you that ever you were born.

2 Cor. 5. 9
10, 11.

Act. 3. 19.

I have read a Story of one, who being risen from the dead, and being asked in what condition he was, he made answer, no man doth believe, no man doth

H 4

be-

The *Turks* have a tradition, and a practice of opinion, that wicked men shall at the great day carry their sins in ladders after their Captain Cain, but well would it be for them, if this should be all their punishment in that great day.

believe, no man doth believe. And being further asked what he meant by that repetition, he answered, no man doth believe, how exactly God examineth, how strictly God judgeth, how severe'y he punisheth. Oh! that that the ways of most young persons did not declare to all the world that they do not, and that they will not believe the dread, and terrour of that day, that will admit of no Plea, nor place for Apology or Appeal: the highest and last Tribunal, can never be appealed from, or repealed.

Now if for all that hath been said, you are resolved to spend the flower of your days, and the prime of your strength, in the service of sin and the world, then know, that no tongue can express, no heart can conceive, that trouble of mind, that terror of soul, that horror of conscience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that sighing and groaning, that

that cursing and banning, that stamping and tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, that certainly shall attend you, when God shall bring you into Judgement for all your foolishness, and lightness, for all your wickedness and wantonness, for all your prophaneness and baseness, for all your neglect of God, your grieving the Comforter, your trampling under foot the blood of a Saviour, for your despising of the Means, for your prizing Earth above Heaven, and the pleasures of this World, above the pleasures that be at Gods right Hand.

O! how will you wish in that day, when your sins shall be charged on you, when Justice shall be armed against you, when Conscience shall be gnawing within you, when the World shall be a flaming Fire about you, when the Gates of Heaven shall be shut against you, and the flames of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

H 5.

Angels

St. Chrysostom speaking of this day, saith, for Christ at this day, to say depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thousand Hells, Chrysostom ad Pop. Anti-och.

Angels and Saints shall sit in Judgment upon you, and for ever turn their faces from you when evil spirits shall be tertifying of you, and Jesus Christ for ever disowning of you, how will you (I say) wish in that day, that you had never been born, or that you might now be unborn, or that your Mothers Wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wish to be turn'd into a bird, a beast, a stock, a stone, a Toad, a Tree! Oh that our immortal souls were mortal! O that we were nothing! O that we were any thing but what we are!

I have read a remarkable story of a King that was heavy, and sad, and wept, which when his Brother saw, he asked him why he was so pensive? Because (saith he) I have judged others, and now I mst be judged my self: And why (saith his Brother) do you so take on for this, it will (happily) be a long time ere that day come, and besides, that is but a sleight matter

Joan. Di-

masc. &

Author

Anonym.

de quat.

Noviss.

Impress.

Daven.

Ann. 1494

ter. The King said little to it for the present.

Now it was a custom in that Country, when any had committed Treason, there was a Trumpet sounded at his door in the night time, and he was next day brought out to be executed; now the King commanded a Trumpet to be sounded at his Brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his sleep, when he heard it arose, and came quaking, and trembling to the King; How now, saith the King? what's the matter you are so affrighted? I am saith he, attached of Treason, and next morning I shall be executed; Why, saith the King to him again, are you so troubled at that, knowing that you shall be judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conscience tells you, you are clear of? How much more therefore may I be afraid, seeing that God shall judge me, and not in a matter that my Conscience frees me
of

of, but of that whereof I am guilty? and besides this, if the worst come, it is but a temporary death you shall dye, but I am liable to death eternal, both of body and soul. I will leave the Application to those young persons, that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to be good betimes, and to acquaint themselves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to those young men and women, who begin to seek, serve, and love the Lord in the Prim-rose of their days, the day of Judgment will be to them, (*melodia in aura, jubilum in corde*) like Music in the ear, and a Jubilee in the heart, this day will be to them, a day of Refreshing, a day of Redemption, a day of Vindication, a day of Coronation, a day of Consolation, a day of Salvation, it will be to them, a Marriage day, a Harvest day, a Pay day: Now the Lord will pay them for all the prayers, they have

Act 3. 19,

10, 21, 22.

Mic. 7. 7,

8, 9, 10, 11

Rev. 19. 6,

7, 8, 9, 10.

Mat. 15.

34. 10 v. 41

have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the tears they have shed: in this great day Christ will remember all the individual Offices of Love and Friendship shewed to any of his; now he will mention many things for their honour and comfort, that they never minded, now the least and lowest acts of Love and Pity towards his, shall be interpreted as a special kindness shewed to himself. Now the Crown shall be set upon their heads, and the Royal Robe put upon their backs, now all the World shall see that they have not served the Lord for nought: Now Christ will pass over all their weaknesses, and make honourable mention of all the Services they have performed, of all the mercies they have improved, and of all the great things that for his Name and Glory, they have suffered.

2 Tim. 4. 8
Mal. 3. 17,
18.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Quest. **B**Ut here an apt question may be moved.

Whether at this great day, the sin of the Saints shall be brought into the judgment of discussion and discovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publickly manifest, proclaim, and make mention of the sins of his people or n?

I humbly judge according to m^{ost} present light, that he will not; and my reasons for it are these, viz.

The first is drawn from Christ's judicial proceedings in the last day, set down largely and clearly, in the 25. of *Matthew*, where he innumerateh only the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the spots and blots, of the stains and blemishes, of the infirmities, and enormities, of the weaknesses and wickednesses of his people. My

Second Reason is taken from Christ's vehement protestations

that

Deut. 32.

45, 6.

that they shall not come into judgment, John 5. 24. *Verily, Verily,* I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Those words shall not come into condemnation, are not rightly translated, the Original is *ἐκ τῆς νεκρώσεως*, shall not come into judgment, nor into damnation, as you read it in all your English Books, I will not say, what should put men upon this Exposition, rather than a true translation of the Original word; further, it is very observable, that no Evangelist useth this double affirmation but *St. John*, and he never useth it, but in matters of greatest weight and importance, and to shew the earnestness of his Spirit, and to stir us up to better attention, and to put the thing asserted out of all question; and beyond all contradiction; as when we would put a thing for ever out of all question, we do it by a

*Vide Aquin. 87.
Suppl. est.
in l. 4.
Sen. dist. 47*

*Joh. 1. 51.
ch. 3. 3. 11.
ch. 6. 26.
32, 47, 53.
66.*

a double asseveration, verily, verily 'tis so, &c.

Thirdly, because his not bringing the r sins into judgment, doth most and best agree with many precious and glorious expressions that we find scattered (as so many shining, sparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture; as

Isa. 43. 25.

Isa. 44. 22.

First, With those of Gods blotting out the sins of his People. *I even I am he, that blot out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.*

Who is this that blots out transgressions? he that hath the keys of Heaven and Hell at his girdle, that opens and no man shuts, that shuts and no man opens, he that hath the power of life and death of condemning and absolving, of killing and making alive, he it is that blots out transgressions: if an Under Officer should blot out an Indictment, that perhaps might do

do a man no good, a man might for all that be at last, cast by the Judge: but when the Judge or King shall blot out the Indictment with their own hand, then the Indictment cannot return; now this is every Believers case and happiness.

Secondly, to those glorious expressions of Gods not remembering of their sins any more, *Isa. 43. 25.*

Jer. 31. 34.

And I will not remember thy sins; And they shall teach no more every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, saying, Know ye the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, to the greatest of them saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. So the Apostle, For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Heb. 8. 12.

And again, the same Apostle saith, *This is the Covenant that I will make with them; After those days,*

Heb. 10. 17

That
which Ci-
cero said
flattering-
ly of Cae-
sar, is truly
affirmed of
God,
*Nihil obli-
visci solet
præter in-
jurias*, he
forgetteth
nothing
but the
wrongs
that daily
are done
him by
his.

days, saith the Lord ; I will put my
Laws into their hearts, and in their
minds will I write them, and their
sins and iniquities will I remember no
more.

The meaning is, their iniquities
shall be quite forgotten, I will
never mention them more, I will
never take notice of them more,
they shall never hear more of
them from me, though God
hath an Iron memory to re-
member the sins of the wick-
ed ; yet he hath no memory to
remember the sins of the righte-
ous.

Mic. 7. 19.

Thirdly, His not bringing their
Sins into Judgment, doth most
and best agree with those blessed
expressions, of his casting their
Sins into the depth of the Sea ;
and of his casting them behind his
back. He will turn again, he
will have compassion upon us, he will
subdue our iniquities, and thou
wilt cast all their Sins into the
depths of the Sea. Where sin is
once Pardoned, the Remission
stands

stands never to be repealed, pardoned sin, shall never come in account against the pardoned man, before God any more, for so much doth this borrowed speech import: If a thing were cast into a River, it might be brought up again, or if it were cast upon the Sea, it might be discerned and taken up again, but when it is cast into the depths, the bottom of the Sea, it can never be boyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text, the Lord would have us to know, the sins pardoned shall rise no more, they shall never be seen more they shall never come on the account more, he will so drown their sins, that they shall never come up before him the second time.

And so much that other Scripture imports. Behold, for Peace I had great bitterness; But thou hast in love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption;
for

Isa. 38.17.

Psal. 51. 3.

for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back: these last words are a borrowed speech, taken from the manner of men, who are wont to cast behind their backs, such things as they have no mind to see, regard, or remember. A gracious soul hath always his sins before his face (*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me*) and therefore no wonder if the Lord cast them behind his back. The Father soon forgets, and casts behind his back, those faults that the Child remembers, and hath always in his eye; so doth the Father of Spirits.

Fourthly, *His not bringing their sins into judgment*, doth best agree with that sweet and choice expression of Gods pardoning the sins of his people.

Jer. 33. 8.

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned; and whereby they have transgressed against me. So in Micha,
wh

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage (as though he would not see it, but wink at it) he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. The Hebrew word (Nose from Nasa) that is here rendred, pardoneth, signifies a taking away; when God pardons sin, he takes it shier away, that if it should be sought for, yet it could not be found, as the Prophet speaks; In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve; and these words, and passeth by, in the (fore-cited) seventh of Micah, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (Vegnover Gnal) is and passeth over, God passeth over the transgression of his heritage; that is, he takes no notice of it; as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of business; seeth not

Mic. 7.18.

Jer. 50 20.

עבר

Gnabar, he
passed over

not things before him, his mind being busied about other matters, he neglects all to mind his business.

Isa. 40. 1. 2

As *David*, when he saw in *Mephibosheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lameness, or any other defect, or deformity: So God beholding in his people, the glorious Image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* say, *Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sin*; and what is it to pardon sin, but not to mention sin?

Psal 32. 1.

Fifthly, in his not bringing their sins into the Judgment of Discussion and Discovery, doth best agree to those expressions of forgiving, and covering; *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered*. In the Original it is in the plural, *Blessednesses*, lo, here is a plurality of Blessings, a chain of Pearls.

The like expression you have in the 85 Psalm, and the second v.

Thou

Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. *Selah*. For the understanding of these Scriptures aright, take notice, that to cover, is a Metaphorical expression, covering is such an action which is opposed to disclosure; to be covered, it is to be hid and closed, as not to appear. Some make the Metaphor from filthy, loathsome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carcases are buried under the ground; some from Garments, that are put upon us to cover our nakedness, others from the *Egyptians* that were drowned in the red Sea, and so covered with water, others from a great Gulf in the earth that is filled up, and covered with earth, injected into it; and others make it in the last place, an allusive expression to the mercy-seat, over which was a covering.

Now all these Metaphors in the general, tend to shew this, that the Lord will not look, he will not see,

*Sic velantur, ut in
judicio non
revelentur.*

see, he will not take notice of the sins he hath pardoned, to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treasons, and rebellions, and meets with such and such which he hath pardoned, he reads on, he passeth by, he takes no notice of them, the pardoned person shall never hear more of them, he will never call him to account for those sins more. So here, &c. When Caesar was pained, he put his finger upon his scar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples scars and warts, upon all their weaknesses and infirmities, but nothing can be seen but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no spot in thee, Cant. 4. 7.*

Sixthly, It best agrees to that expression of not imputing of sin. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* So the Apostle in that *Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8.* now

to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to set iniquity on his score, who is blessed and adored, &c.

Seventhly, and lastly, It best agrees with that expression that you have in the 113 Psalm, and the 12 Verses. *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our iniquities from us.* What a vast distance is there betwixt the East and West? of all visible latitudes, this is the greatest; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevails with me, to judge that Jesus Christ will not bring the sins of the Saints into the judgement of discussion and discovery in the great day, is, because it seems unreasonable to three considerable things, for Jesus Christ to proclaim the infirmities and miscarriages of his People to all the world.

I

First,

First, it seems to be unsuitable to the glory and solemnity of the day, which to the Saints will be a day of refreshing, a day of restitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been ready proved; now how suitable to this great day of solemnity the Proclamation of the Saints will be, I leave the Reader to judge.

Isa. 9. 6.
 Heb. 2. 11,
 12.
 Eph. 1. 21.
 22.
 Rev. 19. 7.
 Joh. 15. 1.
 Joh. 2. 1, 2

Secondly, It seems unsuitable to all those near and dear relations that Jesus Christ stands in towards his; he stands in the relation of *Father, a Brother, a Head, a Husband, a Friend, an Advocate*: Now are not all these by the Law of relations, bound rather to hide, and keep secret (at least from the world) the weaknesses, and infirmities of their near and dear relations; and is not Christ, is not Christ much more? By how much he is more a *Father, a Brother, a Head, a Husband, &c.* in a spiritual way, than any others can be in a natural way, &c.

Thirdly

Thirdly, It seems very unsuitable to what the Lord Jesus requires of his in this world; the Lord requires that his people should cast Mantle of Love, of Wisdom, of Silence, and secrecie over one anothers weaknesses and infirmities.

Harred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all sins; Loves mantle is very large; Love will find a hand; a plaister to clap upon every sore. *Flavius Vespasianus*, (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends Vices, and as ready to reveal their Vertues: So Divine love in the hearts of the saints; *If thy Brother offend thee, and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother.* the Pills or reprehention are to be gilded and sugar'd over with much gentleness and softness; so they are to be given in secret, tell him between him and thee alone, Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abominable.

Pro. 10. 12.
1 Pet. 4. 8.

Mat. 18.
15.

Heaven is too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Psal. 15. 3.* Now will Jesus Christ have us carry it thus towards offending Christians, and will he himse'f act otherwise? Nay, is it an evil in us to lay open the weaknesses and infirmities of the Saints to the World? and will it be an excellency, a glory, a virtue in Christ, to do it in the great day, &c.

Pro. 19. 11

*Non amo
quemquam
nisi offen-
dam, said a
Heathen.*

A fitch Argument, is this, It is the glory of a man to pass over a Transgression. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression,* or to pass by it, as we do by persons or things, we know not, or would take no notice of. Now, is it the glory of a man to pass over a transgression, and will it not much more be the glory of Christ, silently to pass over the transgressions of his people, in that great day? The greater the treasons and rebellions are, that a Prince passes over, and takes no notice of, the more is his Honour and Glory.

and so doubtless it will be Christs in that great day, to pass over all the Treasons and Rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them as well as to forgive them.

The Heathens have long since observed, that in nothing man came nearer to the Glory, and Perfection of God himself, than in Goodness and Clemency; Surely, if it be such an honour to man to pass over a Transgression, it cannot be a dishonour to Christ; to pass over the Transgressions of his people, he having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again, saith Solomon, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing.* And why it should not make for the Glory of Divine Love, to conceal the sins of the Saints, in that great Day, I know not: And whether the concealing the sins of the Saints in that Great day, will not make most for their joy, and wicked mens sorrow, for their comfort, and wicked mens terrour

Pro. 25. 2.

and torment, I will leave you to judge, and time and experience to decide; and thus much for the resolution of that great question. Having done with the Motives that may encourage and provoke young men to be good betimes, to know, love, ſeek and ſerve the Lord, in the ſpring and morning of their days.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall now come to thoſe directions and helps, that muſt (by aſſiſtance from Heaven) be put in practice, if ever you would be good betimes, and ſerve the Lord in the Prim-roſe of your days. Now all that I ſhall ſay, will fall under theſe two heads:

First, *Some things you muſt carefully and warily decline, and arm your ſelves againſt. And*

Secondly, *There are other things that you muſt proſecute and follow.*

First, *There are ſome things that you muſt warily decline, and they are theſe.*

I. Di-

I. Direction.

First, If ever you would be good
betimes, if you would be gracious in
the spring and morning of your youth,
Oh ! then take heed of putting the
day of death far from you.

Amos 6.
3.

Young Men are very prone to
look upon death afar off, and put
it at a great distance from them ;
they are apt to say to death , as
Pharaoh said to Moses ; *Get thee
from me, and let me see thy face no
more* ; if old men discourse to them
of Death, they are ready to answer
as the high Priest did Judas (in a
different case) *What is that to us ?
look you unto it : we know sickness
will come, and death is a debt that
we must all pay, but surely these
guests are a great way from us, for
doth not David say, The days of a
man are threescore years and ten ? we
have calculated our nativities, and
we cannot abate a day, a minute, a
moment of threescore and ten ; and
therefore it is even a death to us to
think of death, there being so
great a distance between our birth-*

Exod. 10.
28.

Mat. 27.4.

Psal. 90.
10.

day, and our dying-day, as we have cast up the account.

Ezek. 12.
27.

Ah Young Men ! it is sad, it is very sad when you are so wittily wicked, as to say with those in Ezekiel, *Behold, they of the house of Israel say, the Vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are afar off.*

Ah ! Young Men, Young Men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you strengthen sin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of Faith and Repentance more hard and difficult, you lay a sad Foundation for the greatest fears, and doubts.

Mat. 24.
48, 49, 50.
51.

Ah ! How soon may that sad word be fulfilled upon you. *The Lord of that Servant, that saith his Lord delayeth his coming, shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder (or cut him off) and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

teeth. When *Sodom*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amalek*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belshazzar*, when *Dives*, when the fool in the Gospel, were all in their Prime, their Pride, when they were all in a flourishing state, and upon the very top of their Glory, how strangely, how suddenly, how sadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully were they brought down to the Grave, to Hell!

Ah Young Man! Who art thou? and what is thy Name, or Fame? what is thy Power or Place? what is thy Dignity or Glory? that thou dar'st promise thy self an exemption from sharing in as sad a Portion as ever Justice gave to those who were once very high, who were seated among the Stars, but are now brought down to the sides of the Pit? I have read a Story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring, with a Deaths Head, on this condition, that he should one hour daily for seven

Isa. 13. 10.
to the 17.
verse.

days together, look and think upon it, which bred a great change in his life.

Ah young men ! the serious thoughts of death may do that for you, that neither friends, counsel, example, prayers, sermons, tears, have not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to dye is labour in vain, and to put this day far from you, and to live without fear of death is to dye living. Death seizeth on old men, and lays wait for the youngest. Death is oftentimes as near to the young mans back, as it is to the old mans face.

Senibus mors in januis, adolescentibus in insidiis, Bern. De convers. ad Cler. c. 14.

It is storied of *Charls* the fourth, King of *France*, that being one time affected with the sense of his many and great sins, he fetch'd a deep sigh, and said to his Wife, By the help of God, I will now so carry my self all my life long that I will never offend him more ; which words he had no sooner uttered, but he fell down dead and died.

Do

Do not young men put this day far from you, lest you are suddenly surprized, and then you cry out (when too late) *a Kingdom for a Christ, a Kingdom for a Christ*; as once Crook-back Richard the Third, in his distress, *a Kingdom for a Horse, a Kingdom for a Horse*.

Ah Young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; *Oh! I am so sick, that I cannot live, and yet (woful wretch that I am) so sinful, that I dare not dye; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might dye! Oh that I might do neither!* Well, Young men, remember this, the frequent, the serious thoughts of death will prevent many a sin, it will arm you against many temptations, it will secure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the world, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make death easie when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdom that

Shakes

1 Pet. 1. 13
14.
Eccles. 9.
10.

shakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away. Therefore do not, O! do not put the day of death far from you. Take heed of crying, Cras, Cras, to morrow, to morrow, saith Luther, for a man lives forty years before he knows himself to be a fool, and by that time he sees his folly, his life is finished; so men dye before they begin to live.

II Direction.

Secondly, If you would be good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own understanding.

This Counsel wise Solomon gives to his Son (or the young men in his time) My Son, forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my commandments: Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding.

Youth is the age of folly, of vain hopes, and over grown confidence. Ah! how wise might

many

*Pro. 3. 1, 5.
Lean not,
is a Meta-
phor from
an old or
sick man
leaning on
his staff,
&c.*

many have been, had they not been too early wise in their own opinion.

Rehoboams Young Counsellors proved the overthrow of his Kingdom. 'Tis brave for youth, in all things to be discreet and sober-minded. Three virtues they say are prime ornaments of Youth; Modesty, Silence, and Obedience.

Ah! Young men, keep close in every action to this one principle, viz. in every action resolve to be discreet and wise, rather than affectionate and singular.

I remember, that a young Gentleman of *Athens*, being to answer for his life, hired an Orator to make his Defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading; but when the young man, by often reading it, that he might recite it publickly by heart, begun to grow weary, and displeased with it, the Orator bid him consider that the
Judges

Judges & the people were to hear it but once; and then it was likely that they at the first instant might be as well pleased as he.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your selves, or upon others, will in the end be bitterness and vexation of spirit; Young men are very apt to lean on their own Wit, Wisdome, Arts, Parts, as old men are to lean on a staff to support them; (as the Hebrew Word signifies, that is rendered *Lean*, in that of *Prov. 3. 5.*) this hath been the bane of many a choice wit, the loss of many a brave head, the ruine of many a subtil pate.

יש
Shagnan.

Ajax thought it was only for Cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for succour, not for him, whence he was foiled. Lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accomplishments, lest you lose them and your selves too. Leaning to
natu

natural or moral excellencies, is the ready way to be stript of all. *Babylon* that bore *her self* bold upon her high Towers, thick Walls, and twenty years provision laid in for a siege, was surprized by *Cyrus*.

'Twas said of *Cesar*, that he received not his wounds from the swords of enemies, but from the hands of friends, that is, from trusting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, slain by trusting to their own understanding, their own abilities?

'Twas an excellent saying of *St. Austin* (*in te stas, & non stas*) he that stands upon his own strength, shall never stand. A Creature, is like a single drop, left to it self, it spends and wastes it self presently; but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of security.

Ah! young men, young men, you will needs be leaning, when lean upon precious Promises

2 Pet. 1. 4.
Psal. 27. 1.

ses

Joh. 21. 10

Cant. 8. 5.

les, lean upon the Rock that is higher than your selves, lean upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as *John* did who was the youngest of all the Disciples, and the most beloved of all the Disciples. *John* leaned much and Christ loved him much. Oh ! lean upon Christs Wisdom for Direction, lean upon his Power for Protection, lean upon (his Purse) his Fulness for Provision, lean upon his Eye for Approbation, lean upon his Righteousness for Justification, lean upon his Blood for Remission, lean upon his Merit for Salvation.

As the young Vine without her Wall to support her, will fall and sicken: So will you Young Men, without Christ puts under his everlasting arms to support you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him; by leaning on him, you will engage him; by leaning on him, you will gain more honour than you can give; by leaning on him, you may even command him, and make
Him eternally yours. III

III Direction.

Thirdly, If you would be good becomes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then take heed of flatterers and flattery.

Ah! How many Young Men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by harkening to Flatterers, and affecting Flattery? Flattery undid young *Rehobeam, Ahab, Herod, Nero, Alexander, &c.* Flatterers are soul-murderers; they are soul-undoers; they are like evil Chyrurgions, that skin over the wound, but never heal it.

Anastatius the Emperours Motto was (*mellitum venenum blanda oratio*) smooth talk proves often sweet Poyson; Flattery is the very Spring and Mother of all impiety, it blows the Trumpet, and draws poor souls into Rebellion against God, as *Sheba* drew *Israel* to Rebel against *David*; it put our first Parents

1 King. 12
and ch. 22.
Act. 12. 22
23, 24.

rents upon tasting the forbidden fruit ; it put *Absalom* upon dethroning of his father ; it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the *Jews* ; it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, upon rebelling against *Moses* ; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness, &c. it puts persons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon condemning the means of Grace ; it puts men upon abusing God, slighting Christ, and vexing the Spirit ; it unmans a man, it makes him call black white, and white black ; it makes a man change Pearls, for Pebbles, and Gold for Counters ; it makes a man judge himself wise when he is foolish ; knowing, when he is ignorant ; Holy, when he is Prophan ; Free, when he is a Prisoner ; Rich, when he is Poor ; High, when he is Low ; Full, when he is Empty ; Happy, when he is Miserable.

The Flatterers told *Dionysius*, that his spittle was as sweet as Honey.
Rev. 3, 17.
18.

Ah !

Ah! Young men, and young women, take heed of flatterers, they are the very worst of sinners; they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardened in sin, and ripened for Hell. God declares sadly against them, and that in his Word, and in his Works; in his Word, as you may see by Comparing these Scriptures together, *Dent. 19. 18, 19, 20. Psal. 78. 36. Psal. 36. 1, 2. Job 17. 5. Ezekiel 12. 24. Dan. 11. 21, 32, 34. Psal. 12. 2, 3. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips; and the tongue that speaketh proud things: And as God declares sadly against them in his Word, so he hath declared terribly against them in his Works, as you may run and read in his Judgments executed upon *Ababs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniel's* (Princely) false Accusers, &c. And why then will not*

you

Karah signifies any cutting off, either by death, or banishment, &c.

you stop your ears against those wretches, that the hand and heart of God is so much against?

A Preacher in *Constantines* time, presumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face; but he went away with a check. *Euseb. de vit. Const. lib. 44.*

Again, as God declares against them, so good men detest them, and declare against them, as you may see by comparing these Scriptures together, *Psalms* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Proverbs* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Proverbs* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. *1 Thes.* 2. 5, 10. *Proverbs* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* Why so, why? because a man that flattereth his Neighbour, spreadeth a Net for his feet, *Proverbs* 29. 5. The Hebrew Word (*Mah-balick*, from *hhalak*) that is here rendered *Flatterer*, signifieth a *Smooth-boots*, a soft butter spoken man, because flatterers use smooth soft speeches. Also the word signifies *to divide*, because a flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their Nets, and those that give ear to them, will be taken to their ruine. A ly

congratulation

tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruine, Prov. 26. ult. A flattering mouth, ruins name, fame, estate, body, soul, life.

Valerian the Roman Emperour used to say (*Non acerba, sed blanda*) not bitter, but flattering words do all the mischief.

When *Alexander* the great, was hit with an Arrow in the siege of an Indian City, which would not heal, he said to his Parasites, *You say that I am Jupiters Son, but this wound cries, that I am but a Man.*

Now shall good men detest them, and abhor them as they are the Pest of Pests, the Plague of Plagues; and will you own them, will you take pleasure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter? the Lord forbid. O say to all flatterers, as he to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to do with you?*

Nay, once more consider, that
not

The Hebrew word

דַּהַבָּה

Dahbah, signifies such a violent forcing of one as he cannot stand, it signifies to throw down, to drive on forwards till a man fall into destruction.

Hos. 14. 8.

not only the good, but the bad, not only the best, but (some of) the worst of men have manifested their detestation of Flatterers and Flattery.

Leo the Emperour used to say (*Occulti inimici pessimi*) a close enemy is far worse than an open. When a Court-Parasite praised *Sigismund* the Emperour above measure, the Emperour gave him a sound box on the ear.

When *Aristobulus* the Historian presented to *Alexander* the Great a Book that he had written of his glorious acts, wherein he had flatteringly made him greater than he was; *Alexander* (after he had read the Book) threw it into the River *Hydaspes*, and said to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

When the Flatterers Flattered *Antigonus*, he cryed out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, He virtutes non latent in me*) thou lyest, thou lyest in thy throat, these virtues

trues that thou speakest of, I have not in me; but I am like a Leopard, that hath ten black spots to one white.

Augustus Caesar, and *Tiberius Caesar*, were deadly enemies to flatterers, insomuch that they would not be called Lords by their own children.

A good Simbole is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus*, viz. (*Nemo amicus idem & adulator*) no flatterer can be a true friend.

Aristippus (the Philosopher) seeing *Diogenes* washing of Herbs for his Dinner, said, if *Diogenes* knew how to make use of Kings, he need not live upon raw Herbs, as he doth; to which *Diogenes* replied, that if *Aristippus* could content himself with Herbs, he need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionysius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall God, shall good men, shall bad men detest and declare against Flatterers and Flattery, and will not

so. you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea, fly from them, as from a Serpent, and shun them, as ye would shun Hell it self? if you do not, the very Heathens but recited, will rise in judgment against you.

Flatterers are the very worst of Sinners. The Flatterers told *Cesar*, that his Freckles in his face were like the Stars in the Firmament; they bought and sold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleasure. And *Augustus* complained when *Varrus* was dead, that he had none now left, that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by flattery they will be like *Harpalus*, who said, (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaseth the King pleaseth me, when *Astyages* set his own Son before him to feed upon him.

O but let every young man beware (into whose hands this Treatise shall fall) *Quod Deo placet, mihi placet*

cer) that which pleaseth God,
pleaseth me.

I have been the longer upon this,
out of love to young mens Soules,
who are so apt to be insnared in
the Flatterers Net; if ever you
would be good in good earnest,
you must abhor Flatterers, as the
first-born of the Devil, and as such
as are most pernicious to mens
happinets both here and hereaf-
ter.

Whilst an
Ass is
stroaked
under the
belly, you
may lay
on his
back what
burthen
you
please.

It is reported of one *Oramazes*,
that he had an Enchanted Egge,
in which (as he boasted himself)
he had enclosed all the happinets
of the World, but being broken,
nothing was found in it but wind.
*Flatterers are the greatest Cheaters,
the greatest Deceivers in the World.*

They say of the *Crocodile*, that
when he hath killed a man, he
will weep over him, as if he were
sorry, and did repent for what
he had done; the Application is
easie.

IV. Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would be good sometimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the world.*

Mat. 19.
16.--24.

The young man in the Gospel took many a step toward Heaven; *All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* Christ makes a very fair offer to him in his next words, *Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow me; thou shalt have Heaven for Earth, a Sea for a Drop, a Treasure for a Mite, a Crown for a Crown.* I but the young mans affections were strongly engaged to the things of the World: and therefore he turns his back upon Christ, and goes away sorrowful because he had great possessions. Oh! the madness, the folly of this young man,

*Multi a-
mando res
noxias sunt
miseri, ha-
bendo mise-
riores.*

Aug. in
Psal. 26.

man, who to enjoy a little temporal felicity, hath bid an everlasting farewell to Christ and Glory; in that of *Gen. 13 2.* it is said that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattle, in Silver, and in Gold; the Hebrew word (*Cabedh*) that is here rendered *Rich*, signifies, heavy, it signifies a burthen, to show us, that riches are a heavy burthen; and an hindrance many times to Heaven and Happiness; and this young man in the Gospel found it so to his eternal undoing. Though the Load-stone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young mans Soul away, when Christ the Pearl of price was present; the World is a sicken Net, and this young man found it so; the World is like golden Fetters, and this young man found it so; the World is like sweet poyson, and this young man found it so; for he had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his

They are
dulce venenum, a
sweet
poyson.
Bern.

soul for Christ or Heaven, for Grace or Glory. Some say, that when the Serpent *Scyrale* cannot overtake the flying P. flengers, she dorb with her beautiful colours, so astonish and amaze them, that they have no power to pass away, till she have slung them; such a Serpent the world proved to the young man in the Gospel, it did so affect him and take him, so amaze him, and amuse him, that he could not stir till it slung him to death.

When the Moon is fullest, it is furthest from the Sun; so the more men have of the World, the further (commonly) they are from God; and this the young man in the Gospel made good.

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing, to gain the things of this world, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achan's* golden Wedge, proved a Wedge to cleave him; and his Garment, a Garment to shrowd him.

The whole world is circular, the heart

If money were thrown to the Dogs, they would not so much as smell at it; the greater is their folly and madness, that will go to Hell Gates for it.

heart of a man is triangular, and we know a circle cannot fill a triangle; yea, if it be not filled with the three Persons in Trinity, it will be filled with the World, the Flesh and the Devil. The World may be resembled to the Fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the sight, smooth in handling, sweet in taste, but deadly in effect and operation.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, have none of you found it so?

The World in all its bravery, is no better than the Cities which Solomon gave to Hiram, which he called *Cabul*, that is to say, displeasing---or dirty; the world will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, surrounded with many Briers: O the vanity! the uncertainty! the imperfection of all things below! if a man should weigh his pay and his pains together, his miseries and his pleasures together, his joys, and his sorrows together, his mer-

1 King. 9
13.

cies, and his crosses together, his good days, and his bad days together, will he not conclude vanity of vanity, and all is vanity?

In my other Treatises, you may read more of the vanity, insufficiency, impotency, mutability, uncertainty, and inconstancy of the World, and to them I refer you.

It was a wise and Christian Speech of *Charls* the Fifth, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when he had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it, or hating it, only returned him this grave and serious *memento*, (*Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) these are the things which make us unwilling to dye; it was a good saying of one to a great Lord (upon his shewing him his stately house, and pleasant Gardens;) Sir, you had need make sure of Heaven, or else when you dye, you will be a very great loser.

Ah! Young men, Young men, 'tis only Heaven that is above all winds, storms, and tempests; nor hath God cast man out of Paradise for

for him to think to find out another Paradise in this World; the main reason, why many young men dote upon the world, is, because they are not acquainted with a greater Glory: Men are Acorns, till they were acquainted with the use of Wheat. The woman had the Moon under her feet, when she was clothed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve Stars upon her head.

Rev. 12. 1.

Ah! Young men; were you but Clothed with the Son of Righteousness, and had you a Crown set upon your heads, by the hand of Faith, you would have all the things of this World, which are as low, bespotted, and mutable as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would be good betimes, sit loose from the things of this world, be no longer worshippers of this golden Calf, and never let the world, that should be but your servant, become your Lord; Oh! let not the Devil and the World,

Heb. 11.
24, 25, 26,
27, 35. ch.
10. 34.

have more service for an ounce of Gold, than Christ shall have for the Kingdom of Heaven !

Mat. 6. 14.

Ah young men ! the world and you must part, or Christ and you will never meet ; *You cannot serve God and Mammon.* The two Poles shall sooner meet than the love of Christ, and the love of the World.

V. Direction.

Gal. 1. 15.
16.

Fifthly, If you would be good betimes, if you would know, seek, and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your youth, then take heed betimes of carnal Reason, take heed of consulting with Flesh and Blood.

Cicero, a Heathen, could say, that man would not be so wicked, and do so wickedly, were it not for his reason.

Many a hopeful Young Man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally, by harkning to those evil Counsellours.

Carnal Reason is an enemy, yea, an utter enemy, nay, it is not only an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea, enmities, *Rom. 8. 7.* An enemy may be reconciled, but enmity cannot.

ver be reconciled. Carnal Reason is not on y averse, but it is utterly averse to all goodness, it builds strong holds and syllogisms against the most glorious Gospel-truths, and accounts the precious things of Christ as a strange thing; carnal reason will make God and Gospel do homage to it; when carnal Reason is in the Throne, Christ and his truths must all bow, or be judged before its Bar.

Ah! Young men, young men, as ever you would be good betimes, stop your ears against all carnal Reasonings within you; carnal Reason judges the choicest things of the Gospel to be meer foolishness, it is pur-blind, and cannot see how to make a right judgment of Christ, his Word, his ways, and yet will controul all.

1 Cor. I. 2.

If you

So

Gen. 39. 7,
8, 9, 10, 11
&c.
Heb. 11.
24, 25, 26.
Dan. 1.

It is safer and better for you to imitate those young men, who in the morning of their days have graciously, wisely, and resolutely withstood those evil Counsellors, Carnal Reason, Flesh and Blood: *Joseph & Moses, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, all these the Prim-rose of their youth, were good at turning the deaf ear to carnal Counsel, and carnal Counsellors.

Cassianus reports of a young man that had given himself up to a Christian life, and his Parents misliking that way, they wrote letters to him to perswade him from it and when he knew there were letters come from them, he would not open them, but threw them into the fire; this example is worth following.

Another famous example you have in the story of King *Edward* and *Rid*

have Mafs; he stood out, and pleaded the case with them, that it was a sin against God, and provoking to the eyes of his Glory, &c. but they still continued to use many carnal Arguments to persuade the King (who was but a Child about fifteen years of age) but he withstood them a great while; but at length, when he saw he could not prevail (with all his pleading) against those grave men, but that they still continued their suit, he burst out into bitter weeping, and sobbing, desiring them to desist; the Motioners seeing his zeal and constancy, wept as fast as he, and being overcome, they went away, and told one that the King had more Divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies.

Ah! young men, it will be your safety, and your glory, to write after this Princely Copy, when you are surrounded with carnal reason and carnal counsellors, &c.

VI. Direction.

Sixthly, and Lastly, *If you would be good berimes, then take heed of comparing y^r selves with those that are worse than your selves.*

Joh. 9.39.
40.

Luke 18.
11, 12, 13,
14.
Thales,
one of the
seven Sages,
being asked
what was
the easiest
thing in
the world
to do: answered,
to know o-
ther mens
faults, and
none of
our own.

Young men are very apt to compare themselves with those that are worse than themselves, and this proves a snare unto them, yea, oftentimes their bane, their ruine; As it did the young *Pharisee* in the Gospel, who pleaded his Negative Righteousness? he was not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers; and stood on his comparative Goodness, nor as this Publican; he stands not only upon his Comparisons, but upon his Disparisons; being blind at home, and too quick lighted abroad, he contemneth, and condemneth the poor Publican, who was better than himself, making good that saying of *Seneca*, the nature of man (saith he) is very apt (*utimur perspicillis magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to behold

hold other mens faults, rather than Looking-Glasses to behold our own; such Pharisees do justly incur the censure which that lowre Philosopher past upon Grammarians, *That they were better acquainted with the evil of Ulysses, than with their own.*

*Diogenes
apud Laer-
tium. lib.6*

Ah! Young men, young men, you know, he that drinks poyson, though he drinks not so much as another; and he that commits Treason, though not so great, so high Treason as another, shall yet as certainly be poysoned, and hanged, as he that hath drunk a greater quantity of poyson, and committed higher acts of Treason.

Sirs, do not delude, and be-fool your own Souls, if you are not as wicked as others, you shall not be as much tormented as others, but yet you shall be as certainly damned as others, you shall as certainly go to Hell as others, you shall as sure be shut out for ever from God, Christ, Saints, Angels, and all the Treasures,

Plea-

Mat. 11.
22, 23, 24,
25.
As in Hea-
ven, one is
more Glo-
rious than
another,
so in Hell,
one shall
be more
miserable
than ano-
ther. Aug.

pleasures and glories of Heaven, as others, except it be prevented by timely Repentance on your side, and pardoning mercy on Gods.

Wilt thou count it madness O young man ! in him that is sick, to reason thus ; I am not so sick as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Physitian ? And in the wounded man to say, I am not so desperately wounded as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Chyrurgion ? and in the Traitor, to say, I am not guilty of so many foul and hainous treasons as such and such, and therefore I will not look after a Pardon ? and in the necessitous man, to say, I am not so hard put to it as such and such, and therefore I will not welcom a hand of Charity ? and wilt not thou count it the greatest madness in the world, for thee to put off thy Repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the spring and morning of thy youth, because that thou art not as sinful,

as wicked as such and such? if to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in Hell than others, will satisfy thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dyes, and of the fire that never goes out; but like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled, could not be quenched; O then begin to be good betimes! O seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days.

To think often of Hell, is the way to be preserv'd from falling into Hell. Ah ! young men, young men, that you would often consider of the bitterness of the Damned Torments, and of the greatness of their Torments, and of the diversity of their Torments, and of the easelessness of the Torments, and of the

Chrysost.

Hom. 4

in Mar

Sinner is in Hell, dost thou think
O young man! that another Christ
shall be found to dye for him, or
that the same Christ will be Cru-
cified again for him, or that another
Gospel should be preached to him?
Surely no.

*Jac. Rev.
Hist. Pont.
Rom. 119.*

Ah! Why then wilt thou not
betimes return and seek out after
the things that belong to thy ever-
lasting peace? I have read of
Pope *Clement* the fifth, that when
a young Nephew of his dyed, he
sent his Chaplain to a Necroman-
cer, to know of him how it fared
with him in the other World; the
Conjurer shewed him to the
Chaplain, lying in a fiery bed in
which when the Pope un-
derstood he never joyed more,

that these
may be
ly-

that being at the point of death, was stirred up by them that stood by, to repent, and call upon God for Mercy, he with a constant countenance, and without sign of fear, turned his speech to God, and said: *Lord, I have a desire to speak unto thee, not for my self, but for my Wife & Children, for I am hastening to Hell, neither is there any thing that thou shouldest do for me; And* this he spake, saith *Bellarmino* (who was present and heard it) as if he had spoken of a journey to some Village or Town, and was no more affrighted.

*Bellar. de
Arte mori-
endi, l. 2.
c. 10.*

Sir Francis Bacon also in his History of *Henry* the seventh, relates, how it was a common by-word of the Lord Cordes, *That he would be content to lye seven years in Hell, so he might win Calice from the English; But if thou O young man!* art given up to such desperate Atheism, and carnal Apprehensions of Hell, I am afraid God will consume thee one day by Fire and Brimstone; but I would willingly hope

hope better things of all those young persons, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall. And thus you see what things must be declined and avoided, if ever you would be good betimes, if ever you would seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days.

CHAP. VII.

But in the second place, as those things must be declined, so other things must carefully and diligently be practised, if ever you would be good betimes. I shall instance only in those that are most considerable and weighty: As,

First, If ever you would be good betimes, &c. then you must labour to be acquainted with four things betimes.

1. Duty.

First, You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scriptures betimes, you must study the Word betimes; David studied the Word
in

in the morning of his days, in the Prim-rose of his youth, and this made him wiser than his enemies, yea, than his teachers; this made him as much excel the Antients, as the Sun excels the Moon, or as the Moon excels the twinkling Stars. *Timothy* was good betimes, and no wonder, for in the Prim-rose of his days, he was acquainted with the Scripture, he was inured to the Word from his childhood, yea, from his infancy, as the Word properly signifies; so in that 119 Psalm, the 9 verse, *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed according to thy Word.* There is no way to a holy heart, and a clean life, but by acquainting of your selves with the Word betimes. One hath long since observed, That God hath bowed down the Scriptures to the capacity even of Babes and Sucklings, that all excuse may be taken away, and that Young Men may be encouraged to study the Scrip-

Psal. 119.
97, 98, 99.
100, 101,
102, 103.

2 Tim. 3.
15.

2^d Bp^e.
ovs.
from a
Suckling.

Aug.

*Hier. Epist.
Adoro Plenitudinem
Scriptura-
rum. Tert.*

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Histories are comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures. 1. For Antiquity. 2. Rarity. 3. Variety. 4. Brevity. 5. Perspicuity. 6. Harmony. 7. Verity. All other Books cannot equal Gods, either in Age, or Authority, in Dignity, or Excellency, in Sufficiency, or Glory.

Moses is found more ancient and more honourable then all those whom the *Grecians* make most ancient and honourable, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

Gregory calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and soul of God.

The whole Scripture is but one entire Love letter, dispatcht from the Lord Christ to His Beloved Spouse; and who then but would still be a reading in this Love-letter? Like *Cecilia* a Roman Maiden of Noble Parentage, who carried always about her the New Testament, that she might still be

a reading in Christs Love-Letter, and behold the sweet workings of his Love, and heart, towards his dear and precious ones.

Luther found so much sweetness in the Word, in Christs Love-Letter, that made him say, he would not live in Paradise if he might, without the Word (*at-cum verbo etiam in inferno facile est vivere*) but with the Word he could live in Hell it self.

The Word is like the stone *Garamantites*, that hath drops of Gold in it self, enriching of the believing Soul. This the Martyrs found, which made them willing to give a load of Hay, for a few leaves of the Bible in *English*.

St. Augustine professeth that the Sacred Scriptures were his whole delight.

And *St. Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianus*, who by long and assiduous Meditation on the Holy Scriptures, had made his breast the Library of Jesus Christ.

*Hier. Eyist.
ad Heliod.
in Epitaph
Nepotiani.*

And

And Rabbi Chii in the *Jerusalem Talmud*, ſaith, That in his account all the world is not of equal value with one word out of the Law. That which a Papiſt reports, lyingly of their Sacrament of the Maſs, viz. that there are as many myſteries in it, as there be drops in the Sea, duſt on the Earth, Angels in Heaven, Stars in the Sky, Atoms in the Sun-beams, or Sands on the Sea ſhore, &c. may be truly affirmed of the Holy Scriptures.

On the Myſteries, the Excellencies, the Glories, that are in the Word ! Ah ! no book to this book, none ſo uſeful, none ſo needful, none ſo delightful, none ſo neceſſary to make you happy, and to keep you happy, as this. It is ſaid of Caſar (*major fuit cura Caſari libellorum, quam purpura*) that he had greater care of his Books, than of his Royal Robes ; for ſwimming thorow the waters to eſcape his enemies, he carried his Books in his hand above the waters,

waters, but lost his Robes; now what are *Cæsars* Books to Gods Books?

Ah! Young men, young men, the Word of the Lord is a light to guide you; a Counsellour, to counsel you, a comforter to comfort you; a Staff, to support you; a Sword, to defend you; and a Physician, to cure you; the Word is a Mine, to enrich you; a Robe, to cloath you; and a Crown, to Crown you; it is Bread, to strengthen you; and Wine, to chear you; and a Honey-comb, to feast you; and Musick to delight you; and a Paradise, to entertain you.

Psal. 119.

Oh! therefore before all, and above all, search the Scripture, study the Scripture, dwell on the Scripture, delight in the Scripture, treasure up the Scripture; no Wisdom, to Scripture Wisdom; no Knowledge, to Scripture Knowledge; no Experience, to Scripture Experience; no Comforts, to Scripture Comforts; no

The Jewish Rabbins were wont to say, that upon every letter of the Law, there hang Mountains of profitable matter.

De-

Delights, to Scripture-delights ; no
Convictions, to Scripture Convictions ; nor no Conversion, to Scripture Conversion.

*Tolle &
Lege.*

Rom. 13.
13, 14.

*Lib. 8. Confess. c. 11.
Possidon de vitâ. Aug.*

St. *Augustine* hearing a voice from Heaven, that bade him take and Read, whereupon turning open the New Testament, he fell upon that place, *Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* This Scripture so sunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his Conversion, as himself reports. This St. *Augustine*, as he was once Preaching, his memory failing of him, contrary to his purpose, he fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a Scripture or two, not before thought of, to confute their Heresies, he converted *Firmus a Manichean*, as he after acknowledged to *Augustine*, blessing God for that Sermon.

It is reported of one *Adrianns*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the Cause of God, he asked, what was that which caused them to suffer such things? And one of them named that Text; *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*: And this Text was set home, with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not only to profess it, but to dye a Martyr for it.

1 Cor. 2.9

Cyprian was converted by reading the Prophecie of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted by reading the first chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading that Scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* &c.

Rom. 2.21

We read, that *Paphnurgius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two fe-

L

mous

Heb. 4.13.

mous Strumpets from uncleanness, only with this Scripture Argument, *That God seeth all things in the dark, when the Doors are fast, the Windows shut, the Curtains drawn.*

I have read of a poor man, who perswaded a young Scholar to leave reading of Poetry, &c. and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly he did; and it pleased the Lord, before he had read out *Genesis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Prim-rose of his days, he being then but twenty years of age.

Cigen
was her
School-
Master.

I have read of a young Lady, called *Potamia*, of a very Illustrious Family, who endured very much in her Martyrdom, by the extreame cruelty of *Basilides*, her executioner: yet after her death, he berinking himself of the Holy words, and Scripture-expressions that were uttered by her, during her cruel Torments, became a Christian, and within
few

few days after, was himself likewise crowned with Martyrdom.

James Andreas, a Godly Minister, hearing of a *Jew*, that for Theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not seen that kind of punishment, he went to the place where he was hanging between two Doggs that were always snatching at him to eat his flesh; the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew some verses of the *Psalms*, wherein he cryed to God for mercy; Whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and instructed him in the Principles of Christian Religion, about Christ the *Messiah*, &c. exhorting him to believe in him, and it pleased God so to bless his Scripture Exhortations to him, that the Doggs gave over tearing of his Flesh, and the poor *Jew* desired him to procure, that he might be taken down and Baptized, and hang by the neck for the quicker dis-

A Miracle
of Mercy.

patch, which was done accordingly.

I might produce other Instances, but let these suffice to provoke all young persons to a speedy, serious, diligent, and constant study of the Scripture. Ah Sirs! you do not know how soon your blind minds may be enlightened, your hard hearts softened, and your proud spirits humbled, your sinful Natures changed, your defiled consciences purged, your distempered affections regulated, and your poor Souls saved, by searching into the Scripture, by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you should lay up the Manna of God's Word in your hearts, as *Moses* laid up the Manna in the Golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the Staff and the Signet that she received from *Judah*, she laid them up till she came to save her life, and did save her life by it, as you may see in Holy story.

The

Much in the Word is wrapp'd up in a little.

It is more to be admired, than to have *Homer's* *Iliads* comprized in a Nutshell. Heb. 9. 4.

Gen. 38. 18, 36.

The laying up of the Word Now, may be the saving of your souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they go out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb or gravel with them, that they may be ballanced, and not carried away with the Wind.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, you had need to have your thoughts and hearts ballanced with the precious Word, that you may not be carried away with every wind of Doctrine, as many have been in these days, to their Destruction and Confusion.

Narcissus, a beautiful youth, though he would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! How many young men in these days, who were once lovely, and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high, empty, airy Notions, and with strange, monstrous speculations, to their own damnation?

L 2

Ho-

2 Thes. 2.
10, 11, 12.

Holy *Melancthon*, being newly converted, thought it impossible for his hearers to withstand the evidence of the Gospel; but soon after, he complained that Old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancthon*.

Ah! Young Men, young men, if you do not in good earnest give up your selves to the reading, to the studying, to the pondering, to the believing, to the effecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will be too hard for you, the World will be too hard for you, your Lusts will be too hard for you, Temptations will be too hard for you, and Deceivers will be too hard for you, and in the end, you will be miserable; and thus much for the first thing, &c.

2. Duty.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint*
your

your selves with your selves betimes.

If you would be gracious in the spring and morning of your days, then you must see betimes how bad you are, how vile, how sinful, how wretched you are; no man begins to be good, till he sees himself to be bad; the young Prodigal never began to amend, he never thought of returning to his Father, till he came to himself, till he began to return to his own Soul, and saw himse'f in an undone Condition.

Luke 15.
21. 22.

Ah! Young men, young men, you must see your selves, *To be Children of Wrath, to be enemies, to be Strangers, to be as farre off from God, from Christ, from the Covenant, from Heaven, to be Sins Servants, and Satans Bond Slaves*; the ready way to be found, is to see your selves lost; the first step to mercy, is to see your misery; the first step towards Heaven, is to see your selves near to Hell; you won't look as-

Eph. 2. 1, 2
3, 12, 13.
Rom. 6. 16.
Joh. 8. 44.
2 Tim. 2.
26.

Auſtin
ſaith, he
would
willingly
go thorow
Hell to
Chriſt; ſo
will all
that ſee
their need
of Chriſt.

Zanchy
writ a
Tractate,
Quod nihil
ſcitur.

after the Phyſician of Souls, you won't prize the Phyſician of Souls, you will not deſire the Phyſician of Souls, you will not match with the Phyſician of Souls, you will not fall in love, in league with the Phyſician of Souls, you will not reſign up your ſelves to the Phyſician of Souls, till you come to ſee your Wounds, till you come to feel your Diſeaſes, till you ſee the Tokens, the Plague-ſores of Divine Wrath and Diſpleaſure upon you; as the whole do not need the Phyſician, ſo they do not deſire, they do not care for the Phyſician.

Ah! Young Men, as you would be good betimes, begin to acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes, begin to acquaint your ſelves betimes with your Natural and undone Condition.

There is a three-ſo'd ſelf.

1. There is a natural Self, as a mans Parts, Wit, Reason, Will, Affe-

Affections, and Inclinations,
&c.

2. A Religious Self, and so a Mans Duties, Graces, Obedience, Righteousness, Holiness, are called ones self.

3. There is a sinful self, and so a mans Corruptions, Lusts, Sinful Nature, and Dispositions are called ones self; now, if ever you would be good betimes, you must acquaint your selves with your sinful self betimes.

Demonicus being asked at what time he began to be a Philosopher: Answered, *When I began to know my self.* So a man never begins to be a Christian, till he begins to know himself. And indeed for a man to know himself, to acquaint himself with himself, is one of the hardest works in all the World. For as the eye can see all things but it self, so most can discern all faults but their own. *Henry* the fourth, Emperour of Germany. his usual speech was, (*Multi multa*

Luther said, that if a man could perfectly see his own faults, the sight thereof would be a very Hell unto him.

sciunt, se autem nemo, many know much, but few know themselves.

The very Heathens did admire that saying as an Oracle (*nosce te ipsum*) know, and be acquainted with thy own self. The main exhortation of *Chilo*, one of the seven Sages, was, know thy self; And *Plato* recordeth, that this saying of *Chilo*, know thy self, was written in Letters of Gold, upon the Portal of *Apollo's* Temple.

Juvenal saith, that this saying, Know thy self, came from Heaven. *Macrobins* saith, That the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what course should be taken for attaining to Felicity, answered, Only teach a man to know himself.

Thus you see, that both Divinity and Philosophy doth agree in this, that the best and surest way to true felicity, is to know our selves, to acquaint our selves with our selves.

This

This Duty the Apostle charges upon the *Ephesians*, Remember that you being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time you were without Christ, aliens from the Common wealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World.

Here are five withouts, without Christ, without the Church, without the Promise, without Hope, and without God in the World.

Man in his Natural state is afar off, (he is without) three manner of ways.

1. In point of opinion and apprehension.
2. In point of Fellowship and Communion.
3. In point of Grace and Conversion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes; Ah! such is the corruption of our Nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or

Eph. 2 11

12.

Of dull and insensible men, one long since, thus complained (patientius ferre Christi iacturam, quam suam) that they did more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ than those that were done unto themselves. O the Plague of insensibility.

wet wood, with hissing ; propound any evil, then it is like fire to straw, it is like the foolish Satyr, that made haste to kiss the fire ; it is like that unctuous matter, which the Naturalists say, sucks, and snatches the fire to it, with which it is consumed ; till you come to be sensible of this, you will never begin to be good, you will never look to have your hearts changed, and your souls saved.

The *Aethiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their own Complexion, and they say, that if the brut Creatures could draw a Picture of the Divine Nature, they would make their shape the Copy ; and thus they flatter and delude themselves ; take heed young men, take heed, that you do not put the like cheats upon your own souls ; take heed that you be not like those Limners, who so as they can make a mans Picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it so as

to resemble him: It is safest and best, O young Man! to know the worst of thy self, and to know thy self, as thou art in thy self, and not as thy own flattering heart, or as other flatterers may represent thee to thy self.

3. Duty.

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, *then you must acquaint your selves with Jesus Christ betimes.*

You must know him betimes; A man never begins to be good, till he begins to know him that is the Fountain of all goodness; *This is Life Eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

Joh. 17-3.

The knowledge of Christ, is the beginning of eternal life, it is the way to eternal life, it is a taste of eternal life, it is a sure pledge and pawn to the soul of eternal life.

The Spaniards say of Aquinas, that he that knows not him, knows not any thing; but he
that

that knows him, knows all things, he that knows Jesus Christ, not notionally only, but practically, not apprehensively only, but affectively, he knows all things that may make him happy; but he that knows not Jesus Christ, knows nothing that will stand him in stead, when he shall lye upon a dying bed, and stand before a Judgement Seat.

Justin Martyr relates, that when in his discourse with *Tryphon*, he mentioned the Knowledge of Christ, as conducing to our happiness and perfection, *Tryphon's* friends laughed at it; but I hope better things of those, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall.

Sirs, The Sun is not more necessary to the World, the Eye to the Body, the Pilot to the Ship, the General to the Army, &c. than the knowledge of Christ betimes, is necessary for all those that would be good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would be good betimes, you must labour,
even

even as for life, to know, and be thoroughly acquainted with these six things, concerning Jesus Christ betimes.

First, If you would be good betimes, Then you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may encourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to believe on him, and to marry with him.

*Nec Christus, nec
cælum patitur
hyperbolem.*

If you look upon his Names, his Natures, his Office, his Graces, his Dignities, his Excellencies, his Royalties, his Glories, his Fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? Why, Christ hath tryed Gold to enrich you; are you naked? Christ hath white Rayment to cloath you; are you spiritually blind? Christ hath eye-salve to enlighten you; are you in straits? he hath wisdom to counsel you; are you unrighteous? he will be righteousness to you; are you unholy? he will be holiness and sanctification to you; are you hungry?

Rev. 3. 18.

*1 Cor. 1.
30.*

Joh. 6. 48.

Isa. 55. 1.

Mat. 11.

28.

Mat. 9. 12.

gry ? he is bread to feed you ; are you thirsty ? he is Wine and Milk to satisfy you ; are you weary ? he is a Bed, a Seat, to rest you ; are you sick ? Why, he is a Physician to cure you, &c. (*Omne bonum in summo bono*) all good is in the chiefest Good.

Christ is
the *Bonum*
in quo om-
nia bona.

The Creatures have their particular goodness; health hath its particular goodness, and wealth hath its particular goodness, and learning hath its, and the favour of the Creature hath its, &c. But now Jesus Christ, he is an Universal good; all the petty excellencies, that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole volume of perfections, which is spread through Heaven and Earth is Epitomized in him, *Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, qui in ipso uno bono, bona sunt omnia, Aug.* One Christ will be to thee instead of all things else, because in him are all good things to be found. *Abraham's* Servant brought forth Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold,

to

to win *Rebeckah's* heart to *Isaac*; Gen. 24.
 so should you, O young men, be 53.
 often in presenting to your own
 view, all those amiable and excel-
 lent things that be in Christ to
 win your hearts over to Christ, be-
 times.

Secondly, If you would be good
 betimes, *Then you must know betimes*
that Jesus Christ is mighty to save.

He is able to save to the utter-
 most, all them that come unto
 him, that believe in him, and that
 cast themselves upon him. The
 Lord hath laid help upon one that
 is mighty. Christ saves perfectly,
 thorowly, perpetually, them that
 come unto him.

Heb. 7.25.
 εις το παν-
 τελες.
 Perpetu-
 ally,
 Constant-
 ly.
 Mat. 9.28.
 Isa. 63.1.
 Mighty to
 save.

The three tongues that were
 written upon the Cross, in Greek,
 Latin, and Hebrew, to witness
 Christ to be the King of the
Jews, do each of them in their
 several Idioms avouch this Axi-
 om, that Christ is an All-suffi-
 cient Saviour; and a three-
 fold

Christ is
never va-
cuis mani-
bus, empty
handed.

Rev. 22. 2.
Christ is
like the
trees of
the sanctu-
ary, which
were both
for meat,
and for
medicine.
Ezek. 47.
12.

fold cord is not easily broken. They say, it is true of the Oyl at *Rhemes*, that though it be continually spent in the Auguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never wasteth. Christ is that pot of Man-*na*, that Cruse of Oyl, that bot-*tomless* Ocean, that never fails his people; there is in Christ an All-sufficiency, for all Creatures, at all times, in all places.

The great *Cham* is said to have a Tree full of pearls hanging by clusters; but what is the great *Cham's* Tree, to Christ our Tree of Life, who hath all variety and plenty of all fruit upon him? the happiness that come to Believers by Christ, are so many, that they cannot be numbred; so great, that they cannot be measured; so copious, that they cannot be defined; so precious, that they cannot be valued; all which speaks out the fulness and All-sufficiency of Christ.

There is in Christ (*plenitudo a-*
bundantiae)

abundantia, and *plenitudo redundan-
tia*, a fulness of abundance, and a
fulness of redundancy, as well as a
fulness of sufficiency.

There is in Christ,

1. The fulness of the Spirit.
2. The fulness of Grace.
3. The fulness of the Image of
God.
4. The fulness of the God-head.
5. The fulness of **G**lory.

But I must not **p**ow open, nor
dilate on these things, lest I should
tire both my self and the Reader.

Plutarch in the life of *Phocion*,
tells us of a certain Gentlewo-
man of *Ionia*, who shewed the
Wife of *Phocion*, all the rich Jew-
els, and Precious stones she had ;
she answered her again, all my
Riches and Jewels is my Husband
Phocion ; so may a penitent sinner
say of his blessed Saviour, Christ
is all my Jewels, my Riches, my
Treasures, my Pleasures, &c.
his Sufficiency is all these, and
more

more than these to me.

The *Spanish* Ambassador coming to see the Treasury of Saint Mark (in *Venice*) which is cryed up throughout the World, fell a groping to find whether it had any bottom, and being asked why? answered, In this, amongst other things, my Great Masters Treasure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottom, as I find yours to have; alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potosi*; but what are the *Spaniards* Treasures to Christs Treasures? a man may without much groping find the bottom of all earthly Treasures, but who can find the bottom of Christs Treasures? should all created excellencies meet in one glorified breast, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like Creature to sound the bottom of those Riches and Treasures which are in Christ, *Ephes. 3. 8*. All which speaks out Christs All-sufficiency: and thus much for the second thing.

*Ipse Deus
sufficit ad
præmium.
Bern.*

Thirdly

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, *then you must know betimes that there is a marvellous willingness and readiness in Christ, to embrace, to entertain, to welcome returning Sinkers, and to shew mercy and favour to them.*

The Young Prodigal did but think of returning to his Father, and he ran and met him, and instead of kicking or killing him, he kissed him, and embraced him, his bowels rolled within him, and his compassions flowed out freely to him. *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price.* Nazianzen improveth this place thus; Oh this easie way of contract, he giveth more willingly than others sell; if thou wilt but accept, that is all the price; though you have no merits, though you have nothing in your selves to encourage you, yet will you accept? If

you

Luke 15.
20, 21, 22.

Isa. 55. 1.
The meaning is, sell thy self, thine own wit, reason, self-worth, and that is all Christ desires, saith Augustine upon the words.

Cant. 2. 8.
 Christ
 comes
 leaping
 upon the
 Moun-
 tains, and
 skipping
 upon the
 Hills, to
 shew his
 readiness
 and wil-
 lingness to
 do good
 to souls.

you will, all is freely yours; the Waters shall be yours, to cleanse you; and the Milk yours, to nourish you; and the Bread yours, to strengthen you; and the Wine yours, to comfort you; here poor sinners, are called three times to come; come saith Christ, come, come, to shew how marvellous ready and willing he is, that poor sinners should taste of Gospel delicacies. So in that *John 7. 37.* Jesus stood and cryed, *If any Man thirst, let him come to me, and drink.* So in that, *Rev. 22. 17.* Let him that is a thirst come, and whoever will, let him take the Water of life freely; So in that *Revel. 3. 20.* Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will Sup with him, and he with me; and so in that, *Luke 14. 21.* The Master of the House said to his Servant, go out quickly into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the Maimed, and the Halt, and

the Blind. Here is no man of Quality, of Dignity, of Worldly Pomp or Glory, or of any self-sufficiency, that is invited to the Feast, but a company of poor, ragged, deformed, slighted, neglected, impoverished, wounded Sinners these are invited to Feast with Christ.

Concerning this willingness of Christ, I shall speak more when I come to deal with old sinners, in the close of this Discourse, and to that I refer you, for further, and fuller satisfaction, concerning the great readiness and willingness of Jesus Christ to entertain returning sinners.

Fourthly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that Jesus Christ is designed, Sealed, and Appointed by the Father, to the Office of a Mediator.*

Labour not for the meat which perisheth but for that meat which endureth to everlasting Life, which the Son

Joh. 6.27.
The Father sealed, even God, so the Greek hath it.

ſon of man ſhal give unto you, for him hath God the Father ſealed: God the Father hath made Chriſts commiſſion authenticall, as men do theirs by their Seal. It is a Metaphor, a Simile taken from them who give Commiſſions under Hand and Seal. God the Father hath given it under his Hand and Seal, That Jeſus Chriſt is the only Perſon that he hath appointed, and ſealed, allowed, and confirmed to the Office of our redemption. If Jeſus Chriſt were never ſo able to ſave, and never ſo willing and ready to ſave poor ſinners, yet if he were not appointed, deſigned, and ſealed for that work, the awakened ſinner would never look out after him, nor deſire Union with him, nor Inter-eſt in him; and therefore it is of very great conſequence to know, that God the Father hath ſent and ſealed Chriſt to be a Saviour to his people; him hath God the Father ſealed; ſealed by way of Deſtination, and ſealed by way

of qualification, sealed by his Doctrine, sealed by his Miracles, sealed by his Baptism, sealed by his Resurrection, but above all sealed by his glorious Uction.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tydings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound.

To Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the Oyl of joy for mourning, the Garment of praise for the Spirit of heaviness, that they might be called Trees of Righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified; neither Saints nor Angels are sealed and appointed to the great work of Redemption, but the Lord Jesus is: you should always look upon the

M.

Lord

Isa. 61. 1,
2, 3.

Luk. 4. 18.

Christ was
anointed
of God,

1 By way
of designation. 2

By way of
qualification.

3 By way of
inauguration.

This
anointing
was ordinarily
used in the
installing
men to
offices of
any eminence.

Lord Jesus, as sealed and anointed to the Office of a Mediator, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord ! It is thy Office, as thou art a sealed and an anointed Saviour and Redeemer, to subdue my sins, to change my Nature, to sanctifie my heart, to reform my life, and to save my soul ; and therefore do it for thy Names sake ; O do it for thy Office sake, do it for thy Glory's sake .

Psal 45. 8.

Afts 4. 27

Act. 10. 8.

Joh. 1. 16.

Joh. 3. 34.

Thou art anointed with the Oyl of gladness above thy fellows ; Thou hast a larger effusion of the Spirit upon thee, than others. Thou art anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power, after an extraordinary measure and manner ; thou art indued with all Heroical Gifts, and Excellencies plentifully, abundantly, transcendently, thou art sealed and predestinated ; thou art invested into this Office of Mediatorship under the Fathers hand and

and seal ; and therefore whither should I go for salvation, for remission, for redemption, for grace, for glory, but to thee ?

Fifthly, If you would be good sometimes, then you must know sometimes that there is no way to Salvation, but by Jesus Christ.

Neither is there salvation in any other (speaking of Christ) for there is none other Name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved ; if ever you are saved, you must be saved by him, and him only, you must not look for another Saviour, nor you must not look for a Co-Saviour, you must be saved wholly by Christ, and only by Christ, or you shall never be saved ; you must cry out, as *Lambert* did (when he was in the Fire, and lifted up his hands and fingers ends flaming) *None but Christ, None but Christ.* When *Augustus Caesar* desired the Senate to joyn two Consuls with him for the better Government of the State ;

Act. 4.12.
ἐν ἄλλῳ,
that is, by
orthrough
the medi-
ation of
any other.

Act. and
Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate answered, that they held it as a diminution of his dignity, and a disparagement of their own judgement, to joyn any with so incomparable a man as *Augustus*.

Ah Friends ! It is a diminution of Christs dignity, sufficiency, and glory, in the business of your salvation, to joyn any thing with the Lord Jesus, and it is the greatest disparagement in the world to your own judgements, knowledge, prudence, and wisdom, to yoke any with Christ in the work of Redemption, in the business of Salvation.

St. *Augustine* saith, that *Marcellina* hung Christs Picture, and the Picture of *Pythagoras* together; many there are, not only in *Rome*, but in *England* (yea, I am afraid in *London*) who joyn Christ and their works together, Christ and their Prayers together, Christ and their Teachers together, Christ and their Mournings together.

gether, Christ and their hearings together, Christ and their Alms together.

Ah! What a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour do these men make Jesus Christ to be? Except these men come off from these things, and come up only to Jesus Christ in the great business of Salvation, they will as certain'y and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, God commands them not to wear a Garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linnen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee.

Deut. 22.
11. ch. 29.
v. 19.

This Law was Figurative, and shews us, that in the case of our Justification, Acceptation, and Salvation, we are not to joyn our Works, our Services, with

M 2

the

Phil. 3. 9,
10.
Rev. 19. 8.
Gal. 3. 28.
ch. 2. 16.

Rom. 12. 6
Eph. 2. 5.
Rom. 5.
15, 16, 18.

the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt ; God abhors a linſie-wolfie Righteouſneſs. And as by the Letter of the Law, in the Hebrews account, one thread of wool in a Linnen-Garment, or one Linnen thread in a Woolen Garment, made it unlawful ; ſo the leaſt manner of mixture in the buſineſs of Juſtification, makes all null and void. And if by grace, then it is no more of works ; otherwiſe Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace ; otherwiſe Work is no more work : He that ſhall mix his Righteouſneſs with Chriſts, he that ſhall mix his puddle with Chriſts purple blood, his Rags with Chriſts royal Robes, his Copper, with Chriſts Gold, his Water, with Chriſts Wine, &c. is in the ready way to periſh for ever.

On Earth Kings love no Corrivals, Power is impatient of Participation. Chriſt will be *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body ; he will

will be all in all in the business of Justification, or he will be nothing at all; we must say of Christ, as it was once said of *Cæsar* (*socium habet neminem*) he may have a companion, &c. but he must not have a competitor.

Let us say of Christ, as the Heathen once said of his petty Gods (*contemno minutulos istos deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) so long as he had his *Jupiter* to friend, he regarded them not; So, so long as we have our Jesus to friend, and his Righteousness and Blood to friend, we should contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Christian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Christi*) something of Christ in it. He that holds not wholly with Christ, doth ver shamefully neglect Christ, *Aut totum mecum tene, aut totum mitte*, saith *Gregory Nazianzen*.

1 Cor. i.
30.
Rom. 5.
19, 20.

Eph. 3. 19.
20.
Psal. 71.
15, 16, 19.
compared

Isa. 55 2.
Rom. 10. 3

There is no other Name, no other Nature, no other Blood, no other Merits, no other person to be justified and ſaved by, but Jeſus Chriſt; you may run from creature to creature, and from Duty to Duty, and from Ordinance to Ordinance; and when you have wearied and tired out your ſelves in ſeeking eaſe and reſt, ſatisfaction and remiſſion, juſtification and ſalvation in one way and another, you will be forced after all to come to Chriſt, and to cry out, Ah! none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. Ah! none to Chriſt, none to Chriſt; no works to Chriſt, no Duties, no Services to Chriſts; no Prayers, no Tears to Chriſts, no Righteouſneſs, no Holineſs to Chriſts.

Well, Friends, remember this, that all the tears in the world cannot wipe off (meritoriouſly) one ſin, nor all the Grace and Holineſs that is in Angels and Men, buy out the Pardon of the leaſt tranſgreſſion. All remiſſion is only

ly by the Blood of Christ.

Sixthly and lastly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that the heart of Jesus Christ is as much set upon sinners now he is in Heaven, as ever it was when he was upon Earth.*

Christ is no less loving, less mindful, less desirous of Sinners eternal welfare now he is in Heaven (in a far Country) than he was when he lived on Earth, witness his continuing the Ministry of Reconciliation among poor Sinners in all ages; witness the constant Treaties, that by his Embassadors and Spirit he still hath with poor sinners, about the things of their peace, the things of eternity; witness his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor Sinners, by his Word, Rod, Spirit, to Open, to Repent, to lay hold on Mercy, and to be at Peace with him; witness his continual wooing of poor Sinners in the face of all neglects, and put-offs;

M 5.

in

2 Cor. 5.
20.

Rev. 3. 20.
Isa. 56. 4.
Isa. 27. 5.

Cant. 5. 2.
3.
Luke 14.

Prov. 6. 9.
Mat. 22. 4,
23, 27.

Heb. 13. 8.

Rev. 1. 8,
11. ch. 21.
6.

ch 22. 13.
It was a
custom a-
mong the
Turks, to
cry out e-
very mor-
ning from
an high
Tower,
God al-
ways was,
and al-
ways will
be, and ſo
ſalute
their *Ma-
homet*.

in the face of all delayes and deni-
als ; in the face of all harſh enter-
tainment and churliſh answers ; in
the face of all gain-ſayings, & car-
nal reasonings, in the face of all the
ſcorn and contempt that wretched
ſinners put upon him ; and with ſa-
that plain word, *Jeſus Chriſt, the
ſame yeſterday, to day, & for ever*,
Chriſt is the ſame afore time, in
time, & after time ; he is unchange-
able in his Eſſence, in his Promiſes,
and in his Affections. *I am Alpha
and Omega, the beginning, and the
ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and
which was, and which is to come.*

The Phraſe is taken from the
Greek Letters, whereof *Alpha* is
the firſt, and *Omega* is the laſt ;
the firſt and laſt letter of the Greek
Alphabet is a deſcription of me,
ſaith Chriſt, who am before all,
and after all, who am above all,
and in all, who am unchangeable,
in my ſelf, and in my thoughts and
good will to poor ſinners. There-
fore do not, poor ſouls, entertain

any hard thoughts concerning Jesus Christ, as if he was less mighty, less pitiful, and less merciful to poor souls now he is in Heaven, than he was, when his abode was in this world.

And thus I have gone over those six things that you must know concerning Christ betimes, if ever you would be good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his death-bed, Cardinal *Bembo* citing a text of Scripture to comfort him, he replied (*Apaga has nugas de Christo*) away with these bawbles concerning Christ; but I hope better things of you, and do desire, that you will say of all things, below this knowledge of Christ (that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jerusalem*, and by the way visiting many brave Cities, with their rare Monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments would often say, I must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*. Ah! so do you, Young men
and

and Women, in the midt of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh! we must not stay here, his is not *Jerusalem*, this is not that Knowledge of Christ, that I must have, if ever I am happy here, and blessed hereafter.

4. Duty.

Fourthly and lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint your selves with those that are good betimes.*

Pro. 13. 20

יִרְרֵי

Shall be
broken, or
shall be
worse,
from y^e
to be
raught.

If you would be gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, then you must begin betimes to be much in with them, who are much in with Christ, who lye near his heart, and know much of his mind: *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed; or as the Hebrew hath it, shall be broken in pieces, as when an Army is broken and routed by an enemy. (Holech from Halech) walking with*

the wife, he shall be wise, for so the Original hath it ; it is not talking with the wife, but walking with the wife, that will make you wise ; it is not your commending, and praising of the wife, but your walking with the wife, that will make you wise ; it is not your taking a few turns with the wife, that will make you wise, but your walking with the wife, that will make you wise ; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and constant companions.

'Twas the saying of one, as oft as I have bin among wicked men, I return home less a man than I was before.

Ah friends, you should do as *Joseph in Egypt*, of whom the Scripture saith, *Psal. 105. 22.* (according to the Hebrew phrase) that he tyed the Princes of *Pharaoh's* Court about his heels.

If ever you would gain by the Saints, you must bind them upon your souls, you must labour to have very near, close, and intimate communion with them.

The Jews have a Proverb, that

two dry sticks put to a green one will kindle it; The best way to be 'in a flame God-ward, Christ-ward, Heaven-ward, and Holiness-ward, is to be among the dry sticks, the kindled-coals, the Saints; for as live Coals kindle those that are dead, so lively Christians will heat and enliven those that are dead God-wards, Christ-wards, Heaven-wards, and Holiness-wards. As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth the face of a man his friend.

Prov. 27.
17.

Mens Wits, Parts, and Gifts, and Industry, commonly grow more strong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference and communion.

And as he that comes where sweet Spices and Oyntments are stirring, carries away a sweet savour with him: So he that converseth with those that are good, shall carry away that goodness and sweetness with him, that shall render him sweet, desirable, and delectable to others.

Polemmon

Polemon, that *St. Augustine* speaks of, who was all for Wine and Play, *An. Ep.*
&c. became a brave man, when ^{130.}
he came acquainted with the Philosophers School. So many young men, that have been all for Wine and Women, for Playing and Toying, for Vanity, and Folly, have become brave men, precious men, by the company, counsel, and example of those who were gracious. *D. & or Taylor* the Martyr, rejoyced that ever he came into Prison, because he came thither to have acquaintance with that Angel of God, *John Bradford* (as he calls him) to doubtless many young persons there be, that have much cause to rejoyce, and for ever to bless the Lord, that ever they came acquainted with such and such (who fear the Lord, and who walk in his ways) for the good that they have received by them.

Algerius an Italian Martyr, said, he had rather be in a Prison with

Moses was
of the
same mind
and men-
tal.

Heb. 11.
24, 25, 26,
27.

with *Crato*, than with *Cesar* in the Senate-house.

Ah! Young men, young men, you were better be with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the World, when they are in all their Royalty, and Glory; in the day of account you will find that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus*, though in his rags, than they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in Purple Robes.

Those that
keep ill
company
are like
those that
walk in
the Sun,
who are
are tann'd
insensibly.

Well, Young men, remember this, cloaths and company do oftentimes tell tales, in a mute, but significant language.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the *Spanish* Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no Companion, than a bad one: the Lord grant, that
this

this Heathen (and others among them, that were of the same mind with him) may never rise up in judgment against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise may fall.

And thus I have dispatched those four things that you must be acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your own Hearts, and conditions, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those that fear him) if ever you would be good betimes.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes*, if you would seek and serve the Lord, in the spring and morning of your days, *Then you must shun the occasions of sin betimes*. A man will never begin to be good, till he begin to decline those occasions that have made him bad, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

You must shun and be shy of the very appearance of sin, of the very shews and shadows of sin. The word *ἄποψη*, which is ordinarily rendred *Appearance*, signifies
kind,

We must
shun (*quic-
quid fuit
male colo-
raturum*)
whatsoever
looks
but ill fa-
vouredly,
as Bernard
hath it.

kind or sort; and so the meaning of the Apostle seems to be this, *Abstain from all sort, or the whole kind of evil*; from all that is truly so, be it never so small.

The least sin is dangerous; *Cæsar* was stabb'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice and Lice.

The least spark may consume the greatest House, the least leak may sink the greatest Ship, the least sin is enough to undo thy soul, and therefore shun all the occasions that lead unto it.

Job made Covenant with his eyes; *Joseph* would not be in the room where his Mistress was; and *David* (when himself) would not sit with vain persons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, we cannot be secure. He that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from sparkles; he that is neither tender of his credit abroad, or comfort at home, had need shun, and be
shve

Job 31. 1.
Gen. 39. 10
Psal. 26. 3.
4, 5, 6, 7.

shye of the very shew and shadow of sin ; he that would neither wound Conscience, nor Credit, God, nor Gospel, had need hate the garment spotted with the flesh.

In the Law, God commanded his people, not only that they should worship no Idol, but that they should demolish all the Monuments of them, and that they should make no Covenant nor Affinity with those who worshipped them; and all, lest they should be drawn by these occasions to commit Idolatry with them; he that would not taste of the forbidden fruit, must not so much as gaze on it; and he that would not be bit by the Serpent, must not so much as parley with the Serpent.

It is very observable, That in the Law, the *Nazirite* was not only commanded to abstain from Wine and strong Drink, but also he might not eat Grapes, whether moist or dry, or any thing that

Jude 23.
The Sin,
and the
coat of
the sin is
to be ha-
red, saith
Ambrose.

*Later an-
guis in her-
ba, Snakes
are found
amongst
roses.
Numb. 6.*

3, 4.
*Quid est
vitare pec-
cata, nisi
vitare oc-
casiones
peccato-
rum? Me-
lan.*

What is
it to avoid
sin, but to
avoid the
occasions
of sin?

that is made of the Vine - Tree; from the Kernels, even to the Husk; but why not these small things, in which there could be no danger of drunkenness? surely, lest by the contentment of these he might be drawn to desire the Wine, and so be brought on to sin, to break his Vow (and so make work for Hell, or for the Physician of Souls.) God hereby forbidding the most remote occasions, shews how wary and exactly careful men should be, to shun and avoid all occasions, provocations, and appearances of evil; and indeed, we had need to keep off from slippery places, who can hardly stand fast on dry ground; he that ventures upon the occasion of sin, and then prays, *Lord, lead me not into temptation*, is like him that thrusts his finger into the fire, and then prays, that it may not be burnt; or, like him that is resolved to quench the fire with Oyl, which instead of quenching it, is as fuel

to

to feed it, and encrease it.

It was a notable saying of one,
*(Majus est miraculum inter vehem-
 entes occasiones non cadere, quam
 mortuos suscitare)* It is a greater
 Miracle, not to fall, being among
 strong occasions, than it is to raise
 up the dead; he that would not
 be defiled, must not touch Pitch;
 he that would not be burnt, must
 not carry fire in his bosom; he
 that would not eat the meat, must
 not meddle with the broth; he
 that would not fall into the Pit,
 must not dance upon the brink;
 he that would not feel the blow,
 must keep off from the Train;
Keep thee far from a false master,
 Exod. 23. 7.

He that will not flye from the
 occasions and allurements of sin
 (though they may seem never so
 pleasant to the eye, or sweet to the
 taste) shall find them in the end
 to be more sharp than Vinegar,
 more bitter than Wormwood, more
 deadly than poyson.

Bernard in
 Cant.
 Ser. 65.

Pro. 6.27,
 28, 29.
*Nondiu tu-
 tum est pe-
 riculo pro-
 ximum.*
 Cyp.
 He is not
 long safe,
 that is
 near to
 danger.

There

Eccl. 3.
26, 27.

There is a great truth in that saying of the Son of *Syrach*, *He that loveth danger shall perish therein; he that will not decline danger, shall not be able to decline destruction.*

Socrates speaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the lustrating water fell upon them, deresting (saith the Historian) the Garment spotted by the flesh! and will you, O young men! play and toy with the occasions of sin? the Lord forbid.

There are stories of several Heathens, that have shunned, and avoided the occasions of sin; and will you dare to venture upon the occasions of sin?

Alexander would not see the woman after whom he might have lusted.

Scipio Africanus Warring in Spain, took New Carthage by storm, at which time a beautiful and Noble Virgin fled to him for

for succour to preserve her chastity, being but four and twenty years old (and so in the heat of youth) hearing of it, would not suffer her to come into his sight, for fear of temptation, but caused her to be restored in safety to her Father.

*Aure.
Victor.*

*Dio. in
vita.*

Livia counselled her Husband *Augustus*, not only not to do wrong, but not to seem to do so, &c.

Cesar would not search *Pompey's* Cabinet, lest he should find new matters of revenge:

Plato mounted upon his Horse, and judging himself a little moved with pride, did presently light from his Horse, lest he should be overtaken with loftiness in riding.

Thesens is said to cut off his golden locks, lest his enemies should take advantage by taking hold of them.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathens thus shun and flye from the occasions of
fin,

fin, and will not you? will not you, who sit under the Sun-shine of the Gospel? these will in the great day of account be sad and sore witnesses against those that dally, and play with the occasions of sin.

To prevent Carnal carefulness, Christ sends his Disciples to School to the irrational Creatures, *Mat. 6. 26-32*. And to prevent your closing with the occasions of sin, let me send you to School to the like creatures, that you may learn by them to shun and avoid the occasions of sin.

The *Sepia*, a certain kind of fish, perceiving themselves in danger of taking, by an instinct which they have, they do darken the water; and so many times escape the Net which is laid for them.

Geese (they say) when they flye over *Taurus*, they keep stones in their mouths, lest by gagling, they should discover themselves to the Eagles, which are amongst the Mountains waiting for them; now
if

if all these considerations put together, will not work you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying,

*He that will no evil do,
Must do nothing belongs thereto.*

The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the Passover be done, lest they should be tempted to eat of it.

Exo. 12.
19.

3 Direction.

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes.

If you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then you must study God's Omni-presence betimes. Doubt not he sees my ways, and count all my steps? for his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings? There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the

Psal. 139.
2. 14.

Job 31. 4.
ch. 34. 21.
22, &c.

N

work.

Non se putent adulteri noctis tenebris, vel parietum obtegi. Beda.

*Prov. 5. 20
21.*

Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli astant &c.

Take heed what thou doest, God beholds thee, Angels observe thee

workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young Strumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanness, only with this Argument, that God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument, *Solomon* labours to take off his young men from carnal and sinful courtes; *And why wilt thou, my Son, be ravish'd with a strange woman, and imbrace the bosom of a stranger, for the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Thou mayst deceive all the world, like that counterfeit *Alexander* in *Josephus's* story, but *Augustus* will not be deceived, he hath quicker and sharper eyes.

Ah! young men, young men, you may deceive this man, and that, and as easily deceive yourselves, but you cannot deceive him, who is (*πανόρδαλος, totius oculus*)

oculus) all eye. As the eyes of a well-drawn Picture are fastened upon thee, which way soever thou turnest, so are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one, who being tempted to Adultery, said, they could not be private enough, and being carried from room to room, answered, we are not yet private enough, God is here.

Ah friends ! his eyes which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, compasseth thy words, thy ways, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The Egyptian Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a scepter, shewing that he sees and rules all things.

Ah Friends ! All Thoughts, Words, Hopes, and Hearts, are naked, opened, dissected, and quartered before that God with whom you have to do. God is very curious and exact in marking and observing what is done by men, that he may render to every man according to his works.

Jer.13.17
ch.29.23.

Heb.4.13.
Tetrachelismena.

Aug. de
Civ. Dei. l.
6 c. 10.

S. *Augustine* speaks of an old *Comedian*, when having no other Spectators, went usually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods.

Jer. 5. 21,
22.
Boetius de
Consol. l. 5.

Ah! Young Men and Women, the eye of God should be more to you, than all the world besides; O that the Scripture might be written with the Pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. Hear ye not me (saith the Lord,) and will ye not tremble at my presence? There is a great truth in that saying of his, (*Magna nobis ex hac indita est probitatis necessitas, quia omnia ante oculos judicis facimus cuncta cernentis*) A great necessity of goodness, is from hence put into us, because we do all things before the eyes of a Judge, that sees all things.

4 Direction.

2 Tim. 1. 3.

Fourthly, If you would be good betimes, then you must hearken to the voice of Conscience betimes.

A man will never begin to be good, till he begins to hearken to what Conscience speaks : So long as man turns a deaf ear to Conscience, he is a false Prisoner to Satan, and a sure Enemy to Good.

Psa. 58 4.
Joh 3. 20,
21.

Ah! how good might many have been, had they but begun betimes to hearken to Conscience !

Ah! Young men, do not dally with Conscience, do not play, do not trifle with Conscience, do not stop your ears against Conscience : he that will not in his Youth give Conscience audience, shall at last be forced to hear such lectures from Conscience, as shall make his life a very Hell. A sleepy Conscience is like a sleepy Lyon, when he awakes he roars and rears ; so will Conscience, *Mark 9 22*. Conscience is (*mille testes*) a thousand witnesses, for or against a man ; he that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conscience, shall at last

Such shall find Conscience to be *Judex*, *Index*, *Vindex*.

find his Conſcience like *Prome-
theus's vulture*, that lies ever a
gnawing. *Judas* found it ſo, and
Spira found it ſo, and *Blaer* a great
Councillor of *Scotland* found it
ſo.

*Jo. Wolf.
leſt. mem.
To. 2. ad
An. 1547.*

I have read of one *John Hof-
meiſter*, that fell ſick in his Inn,
as he was travelling towards
Auſpurg in *Germany*, and grew to
that horreur of Conſcience, that
they were fain to bind him in his
bed with Chains, where he cryed
out, that he was for ever caſt off
by God, and that the promiſes
that were ſet before him would do
him no good, and all becauſe
he had wounded his Conſcience,
and turned a deaf ear to Conſci-
ence.

Mat. 8. 19.

Well, Young Men, if you will
not betimes hearken to Conſci-
ence, you ſhall at laſt hear Con-
ſcience ſaying to you, as the pro-
bationer Diſciple ſaid to Chriſt,
*Maſter, I will follow thee whither-
ſoever thou goeſt*; So ſaith Con-
ſcience, Sinner, I have called up-
on

on thee many a thousand times,
and told thee, that I must by com-
mission, be thy best friend, o
thy worst enemy, but thou would-
est not hear; and therefore, now
I will follow thee, whither ever
thou goest; fast, and I will follow
thee, and fill thee with horrors,
and terrors; feast, and I will follow
thee, and shew thee such a Hand-
writing upon the Wall, as shall
cause thy countenance to change,
thy thoughts to be troubled, the
joynts of thy loyns to be loosed,
and thy knees to dash one against
another; stay at home, and I will
follow thee from bed to board;
go abroad, and I will follow thee
into all places and companies,
and thou shalt know that it is an
evil and a bitter thing, that thou
hast so often and so long neg-
lected my calls, and disobeyed my
voice, and walkt contrary to me;
now thou shalt find a truth in
that saying of Luther (*una guttula
malæ conscientie totum mare, &c.*)
one drop of an evil Conscience

Dan. 5 5,6
*Tolle con-
scientiam,
tolle omnia,*
Take a-
way con-
science,
and take
away all,
saith the
Heathen.

ſwallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well, Young men, there is a day a coming, wherein a good Conſcience will be better than a good Purſe; for then the Judge will not be put off with a ſuit of complements, or fair word; nor drawn aſide with hope of reward; and therefore as you would be able to hold up your heads in that day, make Conſcience of hearkning to the voice of Conſcience in this your day.

5 Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt know betimes, wherein true happineſs lies.*

*Quot hæ-
mines, tot
ſententiæ;
So many
men, ſo
many
minds.*

For a man will never begin to be good, till he begins to underſtand wherein his happineſs conſiſts.

The Philoſophers ſpeaking of happineſs, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intencing ſomething, and yet reſolving nothing. Therefore the

the man in *Plutarch*, hearing them wrangle about mans (*summum bonum*) chiefest good, one placing it in this, and another in that; he went to the Market, and bought up all that was good, hoping among all he shou'd not miss of it, but he did; many look for happiness in sin, others look for it in the Creatures, but they must all say, it is not in us (*Nihil dū quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not; if the Conduit-pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no money, he can give no money; if the creatures have no happiness, they can give no happiness; Now this Jewe', this Pearl, happiness is not to be found in the brist, in the bosom of Creatures; in a word, because I must hasten to a close, mans happiness lies,

Isa. 56. 12

Job 28. 14

First, In his Communion with God, as Experience and Scripture demonstrates. Happy is that people, that is in such a case (but give me that word again) yea, happy is that people, whose God is the

Psal. 114.

1.

Lord. A man whose soul is in communion with God, shall find more pleasure in a desert, in a dungeon, in a den, yea, in death, than in the Palace of a Prince, than in all worldly delights and contents, &c.

Psal. 32.1,
2.

Secondly, In pardon of sin, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* It is not, blessed is the honourable man, but, blessed is the pardon'd man: It is not, blessed is the rich man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the learned man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the politick man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the victorious man, but blessed is the pardoned man; Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sins, saith *Luther*.

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when we shall be here no more: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see*

see God. Now they see him but darkly, but in heaven they shall see him face to face, they shall know as they are known; but of these things I have spoken largely elsewhere; and therefore shall satisfy my self with these hints.

Mat. 5. 8.

I Cor. 13. 12.

6 Direction.

Lastly, If you would be good betimes, then you must break your covenant with sin betimes.

You must fall out with your lusts betimes; you must arm and fence your selves against sin betimes; a man never begins to fall in with Christ, till he begins to fall out with his sins; till sin and the soul be two, Christ and the soul cannot be one: Now to work your hearts to this, you should always look upon sin under these Notions.

Isa. 28. 15. 18.

1 Notion.

First, If you would have the league dissolved betwixt sin & your souls betimes, then look upon sin under the notion of an enemy, betimes.

Dearly

1 Pet. 2. 11
Sins, especially a-
gainst
knowledg
are (pec-
cata vul-
nerantia,
& deva-
stantia)
wounding
and wast-
ing.

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and Pilgrims, abtain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. As the Viper is killed by her young ones in her belly, so are poor sinners betrayed and killed by their own lusts, that are nourished in their bosoms.

Pittacus, a Philosopher, challenging *Phylon* the Athenian Captain (in their wars against them) to single Combat, curried a Net privily, and so caught him, and overcame him; So doth sin with poor sinners. The dangerous, pernicious, malignant nature of sin, you may see in the story of the *Italian*, who first made his Enemy deny God; and then stabbed him to the heart, and so at once murdered both body and soul. Sin betrays us into the hand of the devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampson* into the hands of the *Philistines*.

Sugered Poysons go down pleasantly; Oh! but when they are down

down, they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-strings aunder; it is so with sin; Ah! poor souls, have not you often found it so?

When *Phocas* the Murderer, thought to secure himself by building high walls, he heard a Voice from Heaven, telling him, that though he built his Bulwarks never so high, yet the Sn within would soon undermine all.

S. *Ambrose* reports of one *Theodotimus*, that having a disease upon his body, the Physician told him, that except he did abstain from intemperance, drunkenness, and uncleanness, he would lose his eyes; his heart was so desperately set upon his sins, that he crys out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewell sweet light.

Ah! how did his lusts war both against body and soul!

The Old Man is like a Treacherous Friend, and a friendly Traitor; though it be a harder thing

thing to fight with a mans lusts; than it is to fight with the Cross, yet you must fight or dye; if you are not the death of your sins, they will prove the death of your souls.

As one of the Dukes of Venice, died fighting against the Nau-satines, with his weapons in his hand.

The Oracle told the *Cyrrheans*, (*noctesq; diesque; bella gerendum*) they could not be happy, unless they waged War night and day; no more can we, except we live and dye fighting against our lusts.

Ah! Young Men, Can you look upon sin under the Notion of an enemy, and not break with it, and not arm against it?

Well, remember this, the pleasure and sweetness that follows victory over sin, is a thousand times beyond that seeming sweetness that is in sin; and as victory over sin is the sweetest victory, so it is the greatest victory; there is no conquest to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions. *He that is slow to anger, is better than*

than the Mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a City.

It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery lusts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperor was upon his dying bed, among all his Victories only one comforted him, and that was, victory over his worst enemy. (*viz.*) his own naughty heart.

Rom. 7. 22.
23.
2 Cor. 10.
3, 4, 5, 6.
Gal. 5. 17.

Ah! Young Men, young men, your worst Enemies are within you, and all their plots, designs, and assaults are upon your souls, your most noble part; they know if that Fort-Royal be won, all is their own, and you are undone, and shall be their slaves for ever; and therefore it stands you upon, to arm yourselves against these in-bred enemies; and if you ingage Christ in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and when

when you shall lye upon your sy-
ing beds, you will then find that
there is no comfort to that, which
ariseth from the conquests of your
own hearts, your own lusts.

2 Notion.

Secondly, *If you would break
Covenant with sin, if you would arm
and fence your selves against sin be-
times, then look upon sin as the Souls
Bonds.*

2 Pet. 3. 6.
Gal. 3. 10.
Joh. 8. 34.

2 Tim. 2.
ult.

For as bonds tye things together,
so doth sin tye the sinner and the
curse together, it binds the sinner
and wrath together, it links the sin-
ner and Hell together. I perceive
that thou art in the gail of bitter-
ness, and in the bond of iniquity.
Iniquity is a chain, a bond; now
bonds and chains gill the body, and
so doth sin the soul; and as poor
Captives are held fast in their
chains, so are sinners in their sins,
they cannot redeem themselves by
price, nor by power.

Ah! Young men, young men,

no bondage to Soul-bondage, no slavery to Soul-slavery; the *Israelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Christians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baser and ignoble part of man; but yours is Soul-bondage, Soul slavery, which is the saddest and greatest of all.

S. Augustin
saith of
Rome, that
she was
the great
Mistress of
the world,
and the
great
drudge of
sin.

Ah friends! you should never look upon your *sins*, but you should look upon them as your *bonds*, yea, as the worst bonds that ever were; all other chains are golden chains, chains of Pearl, compared to those chains of Iron and Brass, those chains of lusts, with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus look upon his chains, his sins, and not loath them, and not labour for freedom from them? *Justinian* the Emperors Motto was (*Libertas res inestimabilis*) Liberty is unvaluable; if Civil Liberty be, surely Spiritual Liberty is much more; if you ask souls that were once in a state of bondage, but
are

*Chrysoft.
Hom. 19. in
prior. Epist.
ad Corinth.*

are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

It was a good observation of *St. Chrysoftom*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistress was the servant, when she was at the beck of her own lusts, when she tempted, and he refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation, are the greatest free-men; others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedom, *Tit. 3. 3.*

*Jude 23.
Arpaxontes
signifies a
violent
snatching,
as the ten-
der-heart-
ed Mother
to save the
life of her
child, pulls
it hastily,
and with
violence
out of the
fire.*

3 Notion.

Thirdly, *If you would break league with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look always upon sin under the Notion of fire.*

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Oh! snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a child, a friend out of the fire; or as the Angel snatch'd *Lot* out of *Sodom*, hastily, and with a holy violence: natural fire may burn the house, the goods,

goods, the treasure, the servant, the child, the wife, the body ; but this fire burns the soul, it destroys and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand worlds ; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench that fire that burns in his Neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the fire that burns their Neighbours souls : this is, and this shall be for
 a Lamentation.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand upon burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh ! how unable shall I be to endure the pains of hell ? And this restrained him from evil : but what is the fire of hell, to the fire of sin ? now to provoke you to look upon sin under the notion of fire, consider with me, the sundry resemblances between material and immaterial fire, between corporal common fire, and between
 this

*Dr. Deni-
 sons three-
 fold reso-
 lution,
 par. 2.
 sect. 2.*

this Spiritual Fire, Sin. As,

First, Fire is terrible and dreadful; a Ship on fire, an house on fire, Oh how dreadful is it! so sin set home upon the Conscience, is exceeding terrible and dreadful.

Mine iniquity (so the Hebrew) is greater than I can bear; Sin or Iniquity is often put for the punishment of sin, by a Metonymy of the efficient for the effect; for sin is the natural Parent of punishment.

Gen. 4. 13.
Mentiris,
Cain, thou
liest, Cain,
saith one
on the
Text.

Mat 27. 3,
4. 5.

Mine iniquity, saith Cain, is so great, and lies so heavy, so terrible and dreadful upon my Conscience, that it cannot be forgiven: and thus by his diffidence he stabs two at once; the Mercy of God, and his own Soul. So Judas, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, and he went and hanged himself.*

As there is no fighting with a mighty Fire, so there is no bearing up, when God sets home sin upon the Conscience; a man will then chuse strangling, or hanging rather than living under such wounds and lashes of Conscience.

Hi to-

Histories abound with instances of this Nature ; but I must hasten to a close.

Secondly, Fire is most dangerous and pernicious, when it breaks forth of the Chimney, or of the house ; so it is with sin. Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue, worse in the heart, but worst of all in the life. Fire, when out of its proper place, may do much hurt in the house, but when it flames abroad, then it doth most mischief to others.

Sin in the heart may undo a man, but sin in the life may undo others, as well as a mans self. Set a guard upon thy eye, a greater upon thy heart, but the greatest of all upon thy life.

Salvian relates, how the Heathen did reproach some Christians, who by their lewd lives, made the Gospel of Christ to be a reproach ; where (said they) is that good Law which they do believe ? where are those Rules of

2 Sam. 12.
9, 10, 11,
12, 13, 14,
15.

Job 31. 1.
Pro. 4. 23.
Eph. 5. 15.

Salvianus
de G. l. 4.

of godlineſſ which they do learn ; they read the holy Goſpel, and yet are unclean ; they hear the Apoſtles Writing, and yet are drunk ; they follow Chriſt, and yet diſobey Chriſt ; they profeſs a holy Law, and yet do lead impure lives.

But the lives of other Chriſtians have been ſo holy, that the very Heathens obſerving them, have ſaid, ſurely, this is a good God, whoſe ſervants are ſo good.

It is brave, when the life of a Chriſtian is a Commentary upon Chriſts Life.

Auguſtine. One ſpeaking of the Scripture, ſaith, (*verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to be lived and pra-
ctiſed, not read only.

Plutarch. A Heathen adviſeth us to demean our ſelves ſo circumſpectly, as if our Enemies did always behold us. And ſaid another, for ſhame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of Stoicks ; Sirs, live as Chriſtians, or lay down the name of Chriſtians.

Third-

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber Clay to become stiff and strong for the Porters use. So sin hardens, it hardens the heart against the Commands of God, the Calls of, Christ, and the wrestlings of the Spirit.

Jer. 5. 3.
ch. 19. ult.
Isa. 9. 13.

As you see in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and most that are under the sound of the Gospel.

Ah! How many hath this fire (Sin) hardened in these days, by working them to slight soul-softening means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening thoughts of God, and to fall in with soul-hardening company, and soul-hardening principles, and soul-hardening examples, or hardened and unsensible sinners? One long since thus complained, that they did (*Patientius ferre Christi jacturam, quam suam*) more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ, than those which are done unto themselves: This Age is full of such hardened unsensible souls.

Jer. 2. 25.
ch. 18. 12.

Fourth-

Gen. 22.
Psal. 51.
Job 3.
Mat. 26.
Rom. 1. 15.
&c.

Ifidore, the Monk, was very much out, who vaunted that he had felt in himself no motion to sin forty years together.

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active Element ; so is Sin.

Ah ! how lively and active was the fire in *Abraham, David, Job, S. Peter, S. Paul, and other Saints* ? though Christ by his Death hath given its mortal wound, yet it lives, and is, and will be active in the dearest Saints. Though sin and Grace were not born together, neither shall they dye together ; yet while Believers live in this World, they must live together. There is a History that speaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a stone-wall, and all means was used to kill it ; they cut off the branches, and it grew again ; they cut down the body, and it grew again ; they cut it up by the root, and still it lived, and grew, until they pulled down the stone-wall ; till Death shall pull down our stone-walls, sin will live, this fire will burn.

We may say of Sin, as some say of Cods, that they have many lives ; kill them, and they will live,

live again, kill them again, and they will live again : So kill Sin once, and it will live again ; kill it again, and it will live again, &c. Sin oftentimes is like that Monster *Hydra*, cut off one head, and many will rise up in its room.

Fifthly, Fire is of a penetrating nature, it pierceth and windeth it self into every corner, and chink, and so doth sin winde it self into our thoughts, words, and works, it will winde it self into our understandings, to darken them ; and into our judgments, to pervert them ; and into our wills, to poison them ; and into our affections, to disorder them ; and into our consciences, to corrupt them ; and into our carriages, to debase them. Sin will winde it self into every Duty, and every mercy, it will winde it self into every one of our enjoyments, and concernments.

Hannibal having overcome the *Romans*, put on their armor
O on

Isa. i. 5, 6

Rom. 7. 13

17.

Sin is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil.

(*Quodcumque in peccato, peccatum est.*)

Whatsoever is in sin, is sin.

on his Souldiers; and so by that policy, they being taken for *Romans*, won a City; but what are *Haniball's* wiles, to *Sin's* wiles, or *Satans* wiles? if you have a mind to be acquainted with their wiles, look over my Treatise, called, *Precious Remedies against Satans Devices*.

Psal. 21. 9.

2 Pet. 2.

5, 6.

Prov. 6. 32

Eccl. 9. 18

Prov. 13.

13.

ch. 20. 29.

ch. 11. 3.

ch. 15. 25.

ch. 21. 7.

Sixthly and lastly, Fire is a devouring, a consuming Element, it turns all Fuel into Ashes. It is a Wolf that eats up all: So Sin is a Fire that devours and consumes all, it turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* into ashes, it hath destroyed the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, and *Grecian* Kingdoms, and will at last destroy the *Roman* Kingdom also; this Wolf ate up *Sampson's* strength, *Absalom's* beauty, *Achitophel's* policy, and *Herod's* glory, &c. It hath drowned one world already, and will at last burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happiness, the joyes, the comforts, the souls that this Fire (Sin) hath con-

consumed, and destroyed, &c:

Peter Camois a Bishop of Berry, in France, in his draught of Eternity, Numb 7. 5. tells us, that some devout personages caused those words of the Prophet Isaiah to be written in Letters of Gold upon their Chimney-pieces, Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

Isa. 33. 14.

Ah! Young men, young men, I desire that you would always look upon sin under the notion of fire, yea, as such fire as lays the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when others will not.

I have read of a grave and chaste Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lewd Ruffian, after some discourse she called for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but an hour; he answered, it is

an unkind request ; to whom she replied, that seeing he would not do so much as to put one finger upon the coals for an hour, she could not yield to do that, for which she should be tormented, both body and soul in Hell fire for ever. The Application is easie, &c.

4 Notion.

Fourthly, If you would break with sin betimes, if you would arm against sin in the Spring and morning of your days, then you should look upon sin under the notion of a thief.

2 Pet. 2. 4.
Gen. 3.

And indeed sin is the greatest Thief, the greatest Robber in the World, it robbed the Angels of all their Glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradise and Felicity, and it hath robbed all the Sons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the least of which was more worth than Heaven and Earth.

1. It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly engraven

graven upon them, had *Adam* hood, &c.

2. It hath robbed them of their Sonship, and of Sons hath made them Slaves.

3. It hath robbed them of their friendship, and made them enemies.

4. It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them strangers and aliens.

5. It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miserable. It hath robbed many a Nation of the Gospel, and many a Parish of many a happy Guide, and many a Christian of the favour of God, the Joys of the Spirit, and the peace of Conscience.

Well did one of the Fathers call pride and vain-glory, the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellencies, and a pleasant Thief.

Oh! the Health, the Wealth, the Honour, the Friends, the Relations that Sin hath robbed thousands of.

Nay, It hath robbed many of their Gifts, their Arts, their Parts, their Memory, their Judgment;

yea, their very reason, as you may see in *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and those Babylonish Princes that accused *Daniel*.

And so in *Menippus* of *Phenicia*, who having lost his goods, strangled himself. And so *Dinarcus Phidon*, at a certain loss cut his own throat to save the charge of a Cord. And so *Augustus Caesar* (in whose time Christ was born) was so troubled and astonished at the relation of an overthrow from *Varus*, that for certain months together, he let the hair of his head and beard grow still, and wore it long; yea, and other-whiles would run his head against the doors, crying out, *Quintilius Varus*, deliver up my Legions again; by all which it is most apparent, that sin is the greatest Thief in all the world.

Suetonius.

Oh! Then who would not break League and Covenant with it, and be still in pressing of God to do justice upon it, &c.

5 Notion.

Fifthly, If you would break with sin, and arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then you must look upon sin under the notion of a burden betimes.

Nah. 1. 1.

Hab. 1. 1.

Mal. 1. 1.

And indeed, Sin of all burden is the heaviest burden in all the world. Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me. And again, Mine iniquities are gone over my head (saith the same person) as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me to bear. Sin is a weight that easily besets poor souls, it is a burden that so troubles them, and puzzles them, that so curbs them, and girds them, that so presses, and oppresses them, as that it wrings many bitter tears from their eyes, and many sad and grievous sighs and groans from their hearts.

Psal. 40. 12

Psal. 38. 4.

Heb. 12. 1.

Rom. 7. 13
ult.

Again, As Sin is a burden to

Jude 6.

Chriſtians ; ſo it is a burden to Heaven, it made Heaven weary to bear the Angels that fell ; no ſooner had they ſinned, but Heaven groans to be eaſed of them, and it never left groaning till Juſtice had turned them a groaning to Hell.

Numb. 16
26, 35.

Again, As ſin is a burden to Heaven, ſo ſin is a burden to the Earth ; witneſs her ſwallowing up *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, their Wives, Children, Goods, Servants, &c. Ah ſinners ! your ſins make the very earth to groan ; they make the Earth weary of bearing you. Oh ! how doth the earth groan and long to ſwallow up thoſe Earthly wretches, whoſe hopes, whoſe hearts are buried in the earth ; theſe ſhall have little of Heaven, but enough of Earth when they come to dye.

Rom. 8. 19
20, 21, 22,
23.

Cornelius à Lapide, tells a ſtory, that he heard of a famous Preacher, who ſhewing the bondage of the Creature, brings in the Creatures

tures complaining thus, Oh ! that we could serve such as are Godly ! Oh ! that our substance and our flesh might be incorporated into godly people, that so we might rise into glory with them ; Oh ! that our flesh might not be incorporated into the flesh of sinners ; for if it be, we shall go to Hell, & would my Creatures go to Hell ? Oh ! we are weary of bearing sinners, we are weary of serving of sinners ; thus the Creatures groan, thus, the Creatures complain, the sinners sins forcing them to it, &c.

Again sin is a burden to God,
Behold I am pressed under you, as a
Cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.

Amos 2. 3.

By this plain, pithy, country-comparison, God shews how sadly he is pressed and oppressed ; how sorely he is wearied and tired with those peoples sin. Divine patience is ever worn out ; Justice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God seems to groan under the pressure of their

Iſa. 43. 24.

ſins, as a Cart ſeems to do under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins, thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities.* I am as weary of your ſins, as a travelling woman is weary of her pains, ſaith God. Sin was ſuch a burden to God, that he ſweeps it off with a ſweeping flood, *Gen. 7. &c.*

Luke 22.
44.
A ſtrange
watering
of a Gar-
den. *Bern.*
1 Pet. 2.
24.

Iſa. 9. 6.

Again, Sin is a burden to Chriſt, it made him ſweat, as never man ſweat; it made him ſweat great drops of clotted or congeal'd blood. Sin put Chriſts whole body into a bloody ſweat, it made him groan piteouſly, when he bare our ſins in his body on the Tree. Sin made his ſoul heavy even to the death; and had he not been one that was mighty, yea, that was Almighty, he had fainted and fail'd under his burden. And thus you ſee what a burden ſin is to man, to the Creatures, to Heaven, to Earth, to God, to Chriſt; and therefore

as you would break with sin be-
times, look always upon it as a
burden, yea, as the greatest and
heaviest burden in all the World,
&c.

6 Notion.

Sixthly and lastly, *If you would
break Covenant with sin, and arm,
and fence your selves against it be-
times, then you must look upon it be-
times, under the notion of a Tyrant.*

Tit. 3.3.

And indeed, sin is the worst and
greatest Tyrant in the world. O-
ther Tyrants can but Tyrannize
over our bodies, but Sin is a Ty-
rant that tyrannizes over both bo-
dy and soul, as you may see in
the sixth and seventh of the Ro-
mans. Sin is a Tyrant that hath
a kind of jurisdiction in most mens
hearts, it sets up the Law of pride,
the Law of Passion, the Law of
Oppression, the Law of Formality,
the Law of Hypocrisie, the Law of
Carnality, the Law of self-Love;
the

the Law of carnal Reason, the Law of Unbelief, and strictly commands subjection to them, and proclaims Fire and Sword to all that stand out ; this Saints and Sinners, Good Men and Bad, do sufficiently experience.

Thales, one of the seven Sages, used to say, That few Tyrants lived to be old, but it is far otherwise with this Tyrant Sin.

Prov. 4. 16

Isa. 57. 20,
21.

Sin is a Tyrant of many thousand years standing, and though it hath had many a wound, and many a foil, and received much opposition, yet still it plays the Tyrant all the World over. Oh! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ache, the Souls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Pharaoh's Tyranny was nothing to sins Tyranny, this Tyrant will not so much as suffer his slaves to sleep, they sleep not, except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

Other Tyrants have been brought

brought down, and brought under by a humane power, but this cannot, but by a Divine; the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this World, but it is only the power of Christ that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 Cor. 10. 3 4 5, 6, &c. therefore engage Christ in the conflict, draw him in to the battel, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

Vitellius, who had been Emperour of all the world, yet was driven thorow the streets of Rome stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, &c.

Andronicus the Emperor, for his cruelty towards his people, was by them at last shamefully deposed, and after many contumelies, hanged up by the heels.

Ptolemy was put on a Cross. *Bajazet* in an Iron Cage. *Phocas* broken on the Wheel. *Lycion* cast to the Dogs (as well as *Jezabel*.) *Attalus* thrust into a Forge. King *Gath* into a Beer-barrel, &c. But none

of these that have tamed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts that have been in their own bosoms; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants, who notwithstanding have dyed for ever from the hand of a Tyrant within, &c.

CHAP. VIII.

AND thus much for the Directions that young men must follow, if they would be good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of their days. I shall now give some brief Answers to the young mens objections, and the old mans Scruples, and so close up this discourse.

Object. i.

But some young men may object & say, you would have us to be good betimes,

times, and so seek and serve the Lord in the Prim-rose of our days; but it may be time enough hereafter to follow this counsel; we are young, and it may be time enough for us to mind these things hereafter, when we have satisfied the flesh so and so; or when we have got enough of the world, and laid up something that will stand us in stead, and that may oyl our joints when we are old. Now

To this Obj. tion I answer,

First, That it is the greatest folly and madness in the world, to put off **G**od and the great things of eternity with may-bes; what Trades-man, what Merchant, what Marriner, so mad, so foolish, so blockish, as to put off a present season, a present opportunity of profit and advantage, upon the account of a may-be? It may be I may have as good a season, it may be I shall have as golden an opportunity to get and to enrich my self as this is; and therefore farewell to this. No men that are in their right minds will

argue

argue thus ; and why then should you, especially in the things that are of an everlasting concernment to you ?

I have read of one *Monarcho*, a frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his Vassals ; and as Franticks are they who wilfully neglect present seasons of Grace, upon the account of a future may-be, &c.

Young men, if you will but go into burial places, you shall find graves exactly of your length.

Secondly, I answer, it may be if thou neglectest this present season and opportunity of grace, thou mayest never have another ; it may be mercy may never knock more if thou dost not now open ; it may be Christ shall never be offered to thee more, if now thou dost not close with him, and accept of him ; it may be the Spirit will never strive more with thee, if now thou dost resist him, and withstand him ; it may be a pardon shall never be offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it ; it may be the Gospel shall never sound more in thy ears, if

now

now thou wilt not hear it: now set one may-be against another may-be, set Gods may-be against thine own may-be. But,

Thirdly, Doubtless there are many thousand thousands now in Hell, who have pleased themselves, and put off God and the seasons of Grace with a may-be, hereafter may be time enough; It may be when I have gratified such a lust, and when I have treasured so much of the World, I will return, and seek and serve the Lord; but before ever this season or opportunity came, Justice hath cut the thread of their lives, and they are now miserable for ever; and now they are still cursing themselves, because they have slipt their Golden opportunities upon the account of a may-be, &c.

Fourthly and lastly, This putting off of God, and the present seasons of Grace with a may-be, is very provoking to God, as you may see, if you will but read
from

It was an unspeakable vexation to King *Lysimachus*, that his staying to drink one draught of water, lost him his Kingdom.

from the twentieth verſe to the three and thirty of the firſt of *Proverbs*. Nothing ſtirrs and provokes a Maſter more than his Servants putting off his ſervice or his commands with a may-be, it may be I will, it may be I may do this and that; nothing puts a Maſter ſooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may ſee by comparing *Pſal 95. verſe 6.* to the end, with that third of the *Hebrews*, and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. read the words, and tremble at the thought of a may-be, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the ſeaſons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hands one for another, and then made it an excuſe, a put off, they were lame, and ſo could not ſerve in the Gallies of *Francis* the firſt, King of *France*, but this practice of theirs did ſo incenſe and provoke the King, that he ſent them both to the Gallows.

I suppose the Reader is not so young, but knows how to apply it.

Object. 2.

If I should begin to be good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my days, I should lose my friends, I should lose their favour, for they are carnal and worldly, and had rather I should seek after Gold, than God, the Creature, than Christ, Earth, than Heaven, &c.

Now to this I answer, Surely you are out; for,

First, This is the high way, the readiest way to gain the best, the surest, and the soundest friends; *When a mans ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* When a man falls in with God, God will work the creatures to fall in with him: *Joseph found it so, and Jacob found it so, and Job found it so, the three Children found it so, and Daniel found it*

Prov. 16. 7
Job 5. 23,
to 28.

it so, as you all know that have but read one Scripture, and many in this age (as bad as it is) have found that the best way to make friends, is first, to make God our Friend. Ah! young men, young men, you shall not lose your friends (by seeking and serving of the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worst for the best; he that gives up himself be- times to the Lord shall have God for his friend, and Christ for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Christ will be to such,

First, *An Omnipotent friend.*

Secondly, *An Omniscient friend.*

Thirdly, *An Omni-present friend.*

Fourthly, *An Indeficient friend.*

Fifthly, *An Independent friend.*

Sixthly, *An Immutable friend.*

Seventhly, *A Watchful friend.*

Eighthly, *A Loving friend.*

Ninthly, *A Faithful friend.*

Tenthly, *A Compassionate friend.*

Eleventhly, *A Close friend.*

There

Luke 15.7

Isa. 10. 6, 7

8, 9 Heb. 4

13. Isa. 59

16, 17. ch.

44. 24.

Mal. 3. 6.

Psal. 121.

4, 5.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a Brother, Prov. 18. 24. Such a friend is Christ, and such a friend is as ones own soul, & a rare happiness, hardly to be match'd.

Twelfthly, *An universal friend*, a friend in all cases, and a friend in all places. Christ is so a friend to every one of his, as if he were a friend to none besides: Hence it is that they say, not only, our Lord, our God, but my Lord, and my God. Christ is such an universal friend, as that he supplies the place, and acts the part of every friend.

Thirteenthly, *He is our best friend*, Psa. 90. 1. before we had a friend in all the world, he was our friend, Prov. 8. 21.

Lastly, *He is a constant friend; Whom he loves, he loves to the end.*

Augustus Caesar would not suddenly entertain a League of friendship with any, but was a constant friend to those he loved (*amare nec cito desisto, nec temere incipio*) late ere I love, as long ere I leave;

Where

1 Joh. 4. 16.

Tit. 1. 2.

Isa. 63. 9.

Luke 1. 43

Joh. 20. 28

Phil. 4. 19

Joh. 13. 1.

Alexander the Great cannot cut that knot of friendship that is tyed betwixt Christ and his.

Where Christ begins to love, he always loves, *Jer. 31. 3. I have loved thee with an everlasting love:* Now who would not venture the loss of all friends in the world, to gain such a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men and women, let me say to you, what *Seneca* said to his friend *Polybius* (*Eas tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Casare*) never complain of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cesar* is thy friend; so say I, never complain of your loss of friends, so long as by losing of them, you gain Christ to be your friend.

Secondly, Thou wert better be without their friendship and favour than to enjoy it upon any sinful and unworthy accounts, thou wert better run the hazard of losing thy friends, and their favor, by seeking and serving the Lord in the Prime of thy days, than to run the hazard of losing God, Christ, Heaven, Eternity, & thy Soul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace. It was a gallant return which the noble

Mat. 16. 26
Mat. 8. 46.

noble *Sutilius* made his friend, requesting of him an unlawful favor, in such language as this, I had as good be without such a friend, as with him, who will not let me speed in what I ask; to whom he replied, I can want such a friend as you, if for your sake I must do that that is not honest. The Application is easie.

Well, young men, remember this; The torments of a thousand Hells, were there so many, comes far short of this one voice, to be turned out of Gods presence with a (*Non novi vos*) I know you not.

Mat. 7.23.

Ah! Young man, young man, thou wert better ten thousand thousand times to be cast out of the thoughts and hearts of thy carnal friends and relations, than to be cast out of Gods presence with cursed *Cain* for ever, than to be excommunicated out of the general Assembly of the Saints, and Congregation of the first-born, which are written in Heaven: and therefore away with this Objection. But

Gen. 4.
Heb. 12.23

Third.

Esth. 7.

Dan. 6.

Mat. 27. 3,

4, 5.

*Valerian,**Valens,**Bellizarius,**Bajazet,**Pythias,**Dionysius,**Pompey,**William*

the Conqueror,

and many

others

have

found

it so.

Thirdly, The favour and friendship of such carnal persons, is very tickle and inconstant, it is very fading and withering. Now they stroke, and anon they strike; now they lift up, and anon they cast down; now they smile, and anon they frown; now they kiss, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hosanna, Hosanna*, and anon they cry, crucifie him, crucifie him; *Haman* is one day feasted with the King, and the next day made a feast for Crows; the Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King *Darius* his favour one day, and cast into the *Lions Den* the next; the Scribes and Pharisees that cryed up *Judas* one day, did in effect, bid him go and hang himself the next day.

Such mens favour and friendship are as *Venice-Glasses*, quickly broken, and therefore not much to be prized or minded. Histories abound with instances of this nature; but I must hasten, only remembering this, that every days experience tells us, that wicked men

can

can soon turn Tables, and cross their *Books*; their favor and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonahs* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering; and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the Moon? But,

Fourthly and lastly, Who but a mad man would adventure the loss of the Kings *favor*, to gain the *favour* of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazard of losing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase the good-will of the Prisoner at the Bar?

Socrates preferred the Kings Countenance before his Coyn; and so must you prefer the favour of *God*, the countenance of *Christ* and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendship of all the men in the world; when your nearest friends, and dearest relations stand in competition with *Christ*, or the things above, you must shake them off, you must turn *your*

P

back.

Glaucus, who changed his Armour of Gold with *Dio-medes*, for his Armor of Brass, stands upon record for a Fool.

Psal. 4. 6, 7

Psal. 45. 10
Mat. 10. 37
Luke 14. 26, 27.

backs upon them, and welcome Christ, and the things of your peace; he that forsakes all relations for Christ, shall certainly find all relations in Christ, he will be father, friend, husband, child; he will be every thing to thee, who takest him for thy great All.

Object. 3.

I, but I shall meet with many reproaches from one and another, if I should labour to be good betimes, if I should seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my youth.

Now to this I answer,

First, What are reproaches to the great things that others have suffered for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good conscience? what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the heart? what is a chiding to a hanging, a whipping to a burning? no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with, to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Ah! Young men, you should be like the *Scythian* that went naked
in

Hebrews,
ch. 10, 11.
Read the
ten Perse-
cutions.

in the Snow ; and when *Alexander* wondred how he could endure it, answered, *I am not ashamed, for I am all forehead.*

So should you, in the cause and way of Christ, you should not be ashamed, you should be all forehead, you should be stout and bold.

Colonus the Dutch Martyr, under all his reproaches, called to the Judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most bear, his or the Judges; all the reproaches in the world should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not in the least trouble him, nor disturb him ; But,

Secondly, I answer, that all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they do but add pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happiness and blessedness. If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the Spirit of Glory, and of God, rest-

1 Pet. 4 14

Mat. 5. 11,
12.

Chrysost.

So was Jo-
seph, Me-
phibosheth,
Naboth :
and in lat-
ter times
Luther,
whom they
said died
despairing
when he

was alive to confute it. And that Beza ran away with another mans Wife. And that Calvin was branded on the shoulder for a Rogue ; but there would be no end of this stuff, should I say all that might be said.

eth upon you : on their part, he is evil spoken of, but on your part, he is glorified ; the more you are reproach'd for Christs sake on earth, the greater shall be your reward in Heaven ; they that are most load- ed with reproaches here, shall be most loaded with glory hereafter. Christ hath written their names in golden letters in his book of Life, that are written in black letters of reproach for his sake on Earth. 'Twas a good saying of one, *A re- proacher (saith he) is beneath a man, but the Reproached, that bear it well are equal to Angels, of all Crowns, the Reproached mans Crown, will weigh heaviest in Heaven.* But,

Thirdly, I answer, the best men have been mostly reproached, Da- vid was, *Psal. 69. 7. Psal. 89. 50. Psal. 119. 22. Psal. 31. 11. Psal. 109. 25.* And Job was, *Job 19. 35.*

ch. 20.3. Job 16.10. And Jeremiah was, Jer. 20.7.10 yea, this hath been the common portion of the people of God in all Ages of the World, in Nehemiabs time it was so, Neh. 1.3. And they said unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction & reproach. In Davids time it was so, Psal. 79.4 and Psal. 44. 13, 14 and in Jeremiahs time it was so, Lam. 5. 1. Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider and behold our reproach. And in Daniels time it was so, Dan 9. 16. Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. And it was so in the Apostles time, Rom. 3.8. And not rather as we be slanderously reported, as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just, 2 Cor. 6. 8. By honour and dishonour; by evil report, and good report; as deceivers, and yet true: so in that, 1 Tim. 4. 10. For therefore we both labour and suffer Reproach, because we trust in the living God, &c. And it was so in the Primitive

Tertullian:

Mat. 9.34
ch. 12.24.

*Tertul. de
fuga in
persecut.*

times, for when the Christians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worshipped the Sun, and aspired after Monarchy, and committed adulteries, and unnatural uncleannesses. Now who is troubled, who complains of that which is a common lot, as cold, winter, sickness, death, &c. No more should any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Christ himself was sadly reproached, falsely accused, and strangely traduced, disgraced, and scandalized; he was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and sinners, and judged to use the Black Art, casting out devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils; Christ hath suffered the greatest, and the worst reproaches, why then should you be afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Christ hath wore before you? There is a great truth in what he said, (*Non potest qui patitur timere, ejus esse qui passus est*) he that

that is afraid to suffer, cannot be his disciple, who suffered so much; if the Master had been marked with a black Coal, let not the servant think to go free. I am heartily angry (saith *Luther*) with those that speak of my sufferings, which if compared with that which *Christ* suffered for me, are not once to be mentioned in the same day; But,

Fourthly, I answer, that all reproaches shall at last be arraigned at the highest Bar of Justice, for all the reproaches that they have cast upon the people of God.

They think it strange, (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

I am in an extasie, (saith *Picus Mirandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon those now, whom one day they will wish they had imitated. It was excellent counsel that the Heathen Orator gave

1 Pet. 4. 4.
Xenizontai Blasphemo-
ntes. Won-
der and Blas-
pheme.

Cic. 4. in
Verr.

his Hearers (*Ita vivamus ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur*) let us live, as those that must give an account of all at last.

Mal. 3. 17.
Mic. 7. 9,
10, 11.
1 Cor. 6.
3, 4.

St. Chrysostom brings in Christ comforting his Disciples against Reproaches, speaking thus unto them; *What is the wrong grievous to you, That now they call you Seducers and Conjurers?* it will not be long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and Blessings of the whole world; that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their lying words against you, and shall kindle the splendour of your vertue; So they shall be found lyers, evil-speakers, false-accusers of others; but you shall be more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your Glory. Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But,

Fifthly, I answer, That God doth many times, even in this life, bear sad witness and testimony against the reproachers of his people; I will
blefs

bleſs them that bleſs thee, and I will curſe them that curſe thee; God will even in this life curſe them with a witneſs, who curſe them that he bleſſeth; *Pharaoh* found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Jezabel* found it ſo, and *Haman* found it ſo, and the Princes of *Babylon* found it ſo, and the *Jews* find it ſo to this very day.

And Oh ! the dreadful judgments and curſes that God hath poured out upon the Reproachers of his Name, of his Son, of his Spirit, of his Word, of his Ordinances, and of his People, in theſe days wherein we live. I might give you many ſad inſtances of ſuch in our days, whoſe feet juſtice hath taken in the ſnare, men of abſtracted conceits, and ſublime ſpeculations, and indeed ſuch uſually prove the great wiſe Fools, who like the Lark, ſoareth higher and higher, peering, and peering, till at length they fall into the Net of the Fowler; and no wonder, for ſuch perſons uſually are as

Gen. 12. 3.
2 Sam. 16.
11, 12, 13.
Divine
Juſtice is
like *Vul-*
cans Iron-
Net; that
took the
Gods, it
appre-
hends and
condemns
all that
are re-
proachers
and ene-
mies to
his peo-
ple.

(*Crudeli-
tas vestra
gloria no-
stra*) your
cruelty is
our glory,
said they
in *Tertull.*
fire, sword
prison, fa-
mine, are
all de-
lightful to
me, saith
Basil.

censorious, as they are curious.

Sixthly, I answer, *S. Paul* rejoyced more in his suffering reproaches for Christs sake, than he did in his being wrapt up in the third Heaven, *2 Cor. 12. 10.* Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christs sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong. And therefore you have him often singing this Song, *I Paul a prisoner of Jesus Christ: not I Paul wrapp'd up in the third heavens:* He look'd upon all his sufferings, as Gods love-tokens, he look'd upon all reproaches, as pledges and badges of son-ship; and therefore joys and glories under all. Christ shewed his love to him, in wrapping him up in the third Heaven, and he shewed his love to Christ, in his joyful bearing of reproaches for his sake. *S. Paul* rattles his Chain (which he bears for the Gospel) and was proud of it, as a Woman of her Ornaments, saith *Chrysostome.*

Now why should that be matter of

of trouble and discouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? Shall he look upon reproaches as a Crown of Honour, and will you look upon reproaches as a Crown of thorns?

Oh! look upon reproach, as a Royal Diadem, look upon it as Christs Livery, and count it your highest ambition in the world, to wear this Livery for his sake, who once wore a Crown of thorns for your sakes. When *Babylas* was to die, he required this favour, to have his Chains buried with him, as the Ensigns of his Honour; But,

Seventhly, I answer, That by a wise and gracious behavior, under the reproaches thou meetest with for Christs sake, thou mayest be instrumental to win others to Christ.

It was a notable saying of *Luther*, (*Ecclesiast totum mundum convertit sanguine & oratione*) the Church converteth the whole World by Blood and Prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ, by beholding the gracious carriages
of

Sufferings are the ensigns of heavenly Nobility, saith *Calvin*.

It was an observation of Mr. *John Lindsey*, that the very smoak of Mr. *Hamilton*, converted as many as it blew upon.

of Christians under their sufferings and reproaches for Christ.

We read of *Cicilia*, a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behavior under all her sufferings, and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

Adrianus beholding the gracious chearful carriages of the Martyrs, under all their sufferings and reproaches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdom for Christ.

Justin Martyr, was also converted, by observing the holy and chearful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the Cruel Persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian Faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the oftner they were mown down, (saith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And St. *Augustin* observed, that though there were many thousands

See also
the History of the
Council
of Trent.
418.
2 Edit.

lands put to death for professing Christ, yet they were never the fewer for being slain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wise and gracious bearing of reproaches for Christ, be instrumental to win others to Christ; and therefore never plead there is a Lion in the way; but I must hasten: and therefore in the Eighth and

Last place, consider how bravely several of the very Heathens have bore reproaches, and let that provoke you in the face of all *Reproaches*, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, &c.

When *Demosthenes* was reproached by one, I will not, saith he, strive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.

When one came and reproached *Xenophon* (says he) *You have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear reproach.*

And *Aristippus* (the Philosopher) said, *You are fit to cast reproaches, and I am fit to bear reproaches.*

De-

Demochares an *Athenian* Orator was sent to King *Philip* as Embassador, *Philip* asked him how he might pleasure the *Athenians*; forsooth, saith he, *If you will hang yourself*: The Prince patiently sent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more noble, the patient hearer, or venter of such unseemly language:

When one wondred at the patience of *Socrates* towards one who reviled and reproached him; if we should meet one, saith he, whose body were more unsound than ours, Should we be angry with him, and not rather pity him? why then should we not do the like to him, whose soul is more diseased than others?

Augustus Caesar (in whose time Christ was born) bid *Catullus* the railing Poet to Supper, to shew that he had forgiven him.

*Plutarch in
vita Peric.*

It is a notable example that we find of one *Pericles*, who as he was sitting with others in a great meeting, a foul-mouthed Fellow
bitterly

bitterly reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the Fellow followed him, and railed at him, even to his door, and he took no notice of him, but when he came at home, this is all he said, *Friend, it is dark, I pray let my Man light you home.*

Josephus reports of that *Herod*, that is made mention of in *Act. 12. 13.* that when one *Simon* a Lawyer had grievously reproached and scandaliz'd him before the people, he sent for him, and caused him to sit down next to him, and in a kind manner he spake thus to him; *Tell me, I pray thee, what thing thou seest fault-worthy, or contrary to the Law in me?* *Simon*, not having any thing to answer, besought him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and dismissed him, bestowing gifts on him.

Themistocles professed, that if two ways were shewed him, one to Hell, and the other to the Bar, he would chuse that which went to Hell, and forsake the other

Ah! Young men, young men,
shall the very Heathen make no-
thing

thing of reproaches, shall they bear up so prudently and bravely under the greatest loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you, who in your Light, in your Mercies, and in all Gospel Engagements, are so highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may be called to the Bar in the great day, to witness against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall! and so much by way of Answer to the third Objection. But,

Objct. 4:

Fourthly, The young man objects and says, *You press us to be good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring & morning of our days; but we observe that most men mind not these things, but rather give liberty to themselves, to walk in ways that are most pleasing to the flesh, and why then should we be singular and nice, we were better do as the most do?* &c. Now to this I Answer.

1. That though bad examples are

d'n-

dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow *Examples*, than *Precepts*, especially those Examples that tend most to undo them, 2 King. 15. 9. It is said of *Zachariah* the King of *Israel*, That he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of *Jeroboam*, he would be as his Father was, and do as his Father did, whatever came on it.

So the *Samaritans* of whom it is said, 2 King. 17. 41. *These Nations feared the Lord* (that is, they made some kind of profession of the True Religion, as the Ten Tribes had done) and served their *Graven Images* (too) both their Children, and their childrens children (did thus) as did their Fathers, so do they unto this day: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the main Reason why the Kingdom and Church of *Judah* were so settled in their Idolatry, that there was

Præcepta docent, exempla movent, Precepts may instruct, but examples do perswade.

no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembered their Altars and their Groves by the green Trees upon the high Hills, *Jer.* 17. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor wax the impression of the seal, nor paper the Ink, than youth is to follow ill examples.

You may see in *Radbod* King of *Phrygia*, who coming to the Font to be baptized, asked what was become of his Ancestors, answer was made, that they died in a fearful state unbaptized; he replied, that he would rather perish with the multitude, than go to Heaven with a few.

*Ethiopi-
ans* lame
them-
selves, if
their King
be lame,
saith *Dio-
dorus*.
Elian re-
ports, that
there was
a Whore
that did
boast, that

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the Gods, said, *What, do they so? and shall I stick at it? No, I will not.* Sinful examples are very drawing, and very encouraging, many have found it so, to their eternal undoing; those that have no ears to hear what you say, have many eyes to

to see what you do. Bad Princes make bad Subjects, bad Masters make bad servants; bad Parents make bad children, and bad Husbands make bad wives; it is easier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad; it is easier to run down the Hill with company, than to run up the Hill alone.

I would desire all young men often to remember that saying of *Lactantius* (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) he who imitates the bad, cannot be good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream, stood between Vertue and Vice, solicited by both; chuse you must who to follow: Oh! that you were all so wise, as to follow the best; as a woman that hath many Suitors is very careful to take the best: so should you; Life, Heaven, Happiness, Eternity hangs upon it.

But before I come to the second answer, let me leave this note, or

no.

she could easily get Scholars away from *Socrates*; but *Socrates* could get away no Scholars from her.

Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue, worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life, and that because it then in dangers of other men's souls, as well as a mans own.

action, with those who make no conscience of undoing others by their Examples, (*viz.*)

That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their Occasion or Example.

Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*.

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgment than *Ahab*. To sin (*saith one*) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your own, to make you for ever miserable, why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest place in Hell will be for them that have *drawn others* thither by their Example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damned, he should be double damned, because he had largely contributed to the bringing of them to Hell by his wicked example; and therefore he de-

Mat. 23.
5.

Luke 16.
8.

desires that they might be kept out of Hell, (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their coming thither, would have made his Hell more hot, his Torments more insufferable; But,

Secondly, I answer, *If you sin with others, you shall suffer with others.* If you will partake of other mens sins, you shall also partake of other mens plagues. They that have been (like *Simeon and Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they shall be brethren in misery, they that have sinned together imperitently, shall be sent to Hell joyntly, they shall perish together eternally. If you will needs be companions with others in their sins, you shall be sure to be companions with them in their sorrows. The old World sin together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in lusts together, were burnt with fire and brimstone together. *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, they sin together, they murmur and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her

Rev. 18. 4.
Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit,
August.
He burns no less, that burns with company.

Gen. 6.
Gen. 19.

Numb. 16.
26--34.

Exod. 14.

Numb. 25.

her mouth, and swallows them up together. *Pharaoh* and his hosts pursue *Israel* together, and they are drown'd in the Sea together. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* committed folly, uncleanness together, & *Phineas* stabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors have a very pretty parable to this purpose ; A man planted an Orchard, and going from home, was careful to leave such Watchmen as might both keep it from strangers, and not deceive him themselves ; therefore he appointed one blind, but strong of his limbs, and the other seeing, but a Cripple. These two in their Masters absence conspired together, and the blind took the lame on his shoulders, and so gather'd the fruit; their Master returning, and finding out their subtilty, punisheth them both together.

So will Justice deal with you at last, who sin with others ; therefore take heed, young men, of doing as others do ; But,

Thirdly, I answer, *You must not live*

live by examples, but by precepts; you are not to look so much at what others do, as at what God requires you to do, *Exod. 23. 2. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment, Ro. 12. 2. Fashion not your selves like unto this world; that is, do not fashion and conform your selves to the corrupt customes and courses of wretched worldings, who have made gold their God, and gain their glory; the running cross to a divine command, cost the young Prophet his life (though he did it under pretence of revelation from God) as you may see in that sad story, 1 King. 13. ch. &c. (Non parentum, aut majorum authoritas, sed Dei decentis imperium) he command of God must out-weigh all authority and example of men.*

And we must be as careful in the keeping of a light Commandment, as an heavy Commandment, saith a Rabbi: Divine Commands must be obeyed against all contrary

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosper.

Hierom.

The complaint is ancient in *Seneca*, that commonly men live not *ad rationem*, but *ad similitudinem*. *Seneca de vita beata*, c. 1.

ry reasonings, wranglings and examples. S. *Augustin* brings in some excusing their compliance with the sinful customs and examples of those times, in drinking healths, thus; Great Personages urged it: and it was at the Kings Banquet, where they judged of Loyalty by Luxury, and put us upon this Election: Drink or dye, the not drinking of a health, had been our death; he gives this answer, that God who sees that for love to him, and his Commands, thou wouldest not conform to their drunken customs, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatned thee to drink.

Ah! Young men, you that dote so much upon examples now, will find that a stinging, terrifying question, when put home by God, or Conscience, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* 12. 1.

12. But,

Fourthly, I answer, *Company and Allurements to sin will be found no sufficient excuse for sin.*

Gen. 3.

If *Eve* lay her fault on the Serpent,

pent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*,
 God will take it off, and lay the
 curse on both. *Sauls* Provocation
 by his people (and by *Samuels* long
 stay) to offer Sacrifice, would not
 bear him out, but for his diso-
 bedience, he must lose both his
 Crown and Life. The young
 man in the *Proverbs*, though
 tempted and solicited by the
 Harlot, yet he hath a Dart struck
 thorow his heart; though *Joxab*
 did please Gods gracious inclinati-
 ons to shew mercy, and his fear of
 being disproved; yea, and though
 he might have pleaded his fear of
 cruel and savage usage from the
Ninivites (whose hearts were de-
 perately set upon wickedness) and
 his despair of ever doing good up-
 on a people so blinded and harden-
 ed; and that they were *Gentiles*,
 and he a *Jew*, and why should he
 then be sent with so strange, so ter-
 rible a message to such a people,
 nothing being more hateful and
 distastful to a Jewish palate: but all
 these pleas and excuses will not

1 Sam. 15.

14, 15, 26,

27.

Pro 7. 24.

15. 21.

Q

be

*Oculos quos
peccatum
claudit,
pœna ape-
rit, Greg.*
The eyes
that sin
shuts, affli-
ction o-
pens, and
Jonah
found it
so.

bear off the blow ; *Jonah* must into the Sea for all this, yea, he must to the bottom of Hell, as himself phrases it. It is in vain for the bird to complain, that it saw the corn, but not the Pit-fall, or for a fish to plead, it saw the bait, but not the hook. So it will be in vain, for sinners at last when they are taken in an infernal Pit-fall, to plead Company and Allurements by which they have been enticed to undo their souls for ever.

Dionysius the Sicilian King, to excuse himself from the present delivery of the golden Garment he took from his God *Apollo*, answered, that such a Robe as that was, could not be at any season of the year useful to his God, for it would not keep him warm in the Winter, and it was too heavy for the Summer, and so put off his Idol-god; but the God of Spirits, the God of all Flesh, will not be put off with any excuses or presences, when he shall try, and judge the Children of men: But,

Fifthly, and lastly, I answer,

That

That it is a very great judgment to be given up to follow evil examples: a man given up to evil examples, is a man sadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and desperately hardened in sin; it speaks a man ripe for Wrath, for Ruine, for Hell. *Jer. 6. 11.* * Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, and the Fathers and the Sons together, shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish. Ob! It is a dreadful thing when God shall make the sinful examples of others to be stumbling blocks to a people, at which they shall stumble and fall, and perish for ever; good had it bin for such persons that they had never been born; as Christ once spake concerning Judas.

The Rhodians & Lydians enacted several Laws, that those Sons which followed not their Fathers in their Vertues, but followed vicious examples, should be dis-inherited, and their Lands given to the most virtuous of that race, not admitting any impious Heir whatsoever to in-

Q 2

herit:

* This particle behold, is sometimes a note of derision, *Gen. 3. 22.*

2. A note of attention often, *Isa. 28. 6.* *Mal. 1. 1.* *Luk. 1. 20.*

3. A note of admiration often

4. A note of asseveration.

5. A note of castigation; in all these senses we may take it here. *Varr.*

herit, and do you think that God will not disinherit all those of heaven and happiness, who follow vicious Examples? Doubtless he will, 1 Cor. 10. 5--12.

Obj^ct. 5.

The Fifth and last Objection (I shall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy, yea, a Sea, an Ocean of mercy, he loves mercy, he delights in mercy, and he is ready to shew mercy to poor sinners, when they are even at the last cast, when there is but a short stride between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity, as we see in his extending mercy to the Thief, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosom, when he was ready to be turned off the ladder of life; & therefore I may spend the Primrose of my days in following sin, & the delights, profits, vanities, & contents of this world, & at last cast, I may have mercy as well as the Thief. God is a God made up of mercy, and surely he will not deny some crumbs of*
mercy

mercy to poor sinners in misery, &c.

Now to this Objection, I shall give these following Answers.

First, *God is as just as he is merciful*, witness his casting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise; witness all the Threatnings, the Curses, the Woes that the Bible is filled with, from one end to the other; witness the Hell, the Horror, the Terror, and Amazement that he raises in the Consciences of sinners; witness the devastations that he hath made of the most stately flourishing Towns, Cities, Countrys, and Kingdoms, that have been in all the World; witness the variety of diseases, calamities, miseries, dangers, deaths, & Hells, that always attend the inhabitants of the world; but above all, witness *Christs* treading the Wine-press of his Fathers Wrath; witness his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his displeasure and vengeance on him.

Zelus the *Loctenian* Law-giver, thrust out one of his own Sons

God is as well all hand to punish, as he is all grace to pardon.

eyes, for his transgressing of a wholsom Law which he had enacted; but God the Father thrust out both Christs eyes for our transgressing of his Royal Law; Oh! the justice and severity of God. But,

Secondly, I answer, That there is not a greater evidence of blindness, prophaneness, hard-heartedness, spiritual madness, and hellish desperateness in all the world, than to make that an Argument, an encouragement to sin (*viz.* the mercy of God) which should be the greatest argument under Heaven to keep a man from sin, as all know that have but read the Scripture: neither are there any sinners in the world, that God delights to rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon such, who by their abuse of mercy, turn the God of mercy into a God of clouts, and go on out-daring Justice it self, *Deut. 24. 19, 20.* And it came to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace (*God is a God of Mercy*) though

read Isa.
22. 12. to
16. and
Ezek. 14.
10. 15.

though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smite against that man, and all the curses that are written in this Book, shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven. In these words you may observe, that God is absolute in threatening, to shew that he will be resolute in punishing, Psal. 11. 5, 6. The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity, doth his soul hate. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.

A lover of iniquity, is a liver in iniquity upon choice.

Ah! That all poor sinners would make these two Scriptures their companions; their constant bed-fellows, till they are got above that sad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an encouragement to sin.

Whilst *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing asunder the stock of an Oak, his strength failing him, the

cl. ft suddenly cloſing, was held ſo faſt by the hands, that he became a prey to the Beaſts of the Field : All the abuſers of mercy, will certainly and ſuddenly become a prey to the Juſtice of God, that will rend and tear them in pieces, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal 50 22. Wo, wo to the ſoul that fights againſt God with his own Mercies ; that will be bad, becauſe he is good ; that will be ſinful, becauſe he is merciful ; that will turn all the kindneſſes of God (that ſhould be as ſo many ſilver Cords to tye him to Love and Obedience) into Arrows, and ſo ſhoot them back into the heart of God. Abused Mercy will at laſt turn into a Lyon, a fierce Lyon, and then wo to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But,*

Thirdly, In answer to that part of the Objection, concerning the Thief on the Croſs, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

Fiſt, That as one was ſaved to teach ſinners not to deſpair, ſo another was damned, to teach them not to preſume.

*Exemplum
latronis
ſervati eſt
ad miran-
dum, non
ad imitan-
dum.*

A

A pardon is sometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who so trusts to that, the Rope may be his hire. It is not good (saith one) to put it upon the Psalm of *miserere*, and the neck-verse; for sometimes he proves no Clerk, and so hangs for it.

Secondly, It is an example without a Promise. Here is an Example of late Repentance; but where is there a Promise of late Repentance?

Oh! let not his late and sudden conversion, be to thee a temptation, till thou hast found a Promise for late and sudden Conversion; it is not Examples, but Promises that are Foundations for Faith to rest on; he that walks by an Example of Mercy, without a Precept to guide him, and a Promise to support him, walks but by a dark-lanthorn that will deceive him; well, young man, remember this, Examples of Mercy increase wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them. But,

Thirdly, This was a rare Mira-

cle of mercy, with the glory whereof Christ did honour the ignominy of his Cross; and therefore we may as well look for another Crucifying of Christ, as look for a sinners conversion, when he hath scarce time enough to reckon up all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. But,

Fourthly, I Answer: This Thief knew not Christ before, he had not refused, neglected; nor slighted Christ before, the Sermon on the Cross, was the first Sermon that ever he heard Christ preach, and Christs Prayer on the Cross, was the first Prayer that ever he heard Christ make; he knew not Christ, till he met with him on the Cross (which proved to him a happy meeting) his case was as if a *Turk* or *Heathen* should now be converted to the faith; and therefore thou hast little reason, Oh! young man, to plead this example to keep Christ and thy soul asunder, who art every day under the call,

call, the intreaties and wooings of Christ. But,

Fifthly and Lastly, I answer; The circumstances of time and place are rightly to be considered; Now when Christ was triumphing on the Cross over *Sin*, *Satan*, and the *World*; when he had made the Devils a publick spectacle of scorn and derision, when he was taking his leave of the world, and entering into his Glory; Now he puts a pardon into the Thiefs hand, and crouds other favours and kindneses upon him.

As in the *Roman* Triumphs, the *Victor* being ascended up to the capitol in a Chariot of State, used to cast certain pieces of coyn among the people, for them to pick up, which he used not to do at other times: So our Lord Jesus Christ, in the day of his Triumph, and solemn inauguration into his heavenly Kingdom, scatters some Heavenly Jewels, that this Thief might pick up, which he doth not, nor will not do every day; or as
in

in these days it is usual with Princes to save some notorious malefactors at their Coronation, when they enter upon their Kingdoms in Triumph, which they do not use to do afterwards ; So did Jesus Christ carry it towards this Thief, but this is not his ordinary way of saving & bringing souls to Glory ; and therefore do not, O young man ! let not the Thiefs late conversion prove a Temptation, or an occasion of thy delaying repentance, and trifling away the Prim-rose of thy days in vanity and folly. And thus much may suffice to have been spoken by way of Answer to the Young mans Objections. I shall now speak a few words to Old men, and so close up. Now,

CHAP. IX.

IS it so commendable, so desirable, and so necessary for young men to be good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of their Youth, as
hath

hath been sufficiently demonstrated in this Treatise? Oh! then that I could so woo aged persons, as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to seek and serve the Lord before their glass be out, their Sun set, and their Souls lost for ever.

Oh! that that counsel of the Prophet might take hold upon your hearts, *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your foot stumble* (through age) upon the dark Mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

Jer. 13. 16

I, but aged sinners may reply; *Is there any hope, any help for us?* is there any probability, is there any possibility, that ever such as we are should return, and find mercy and favour with the Lord? we who have lived so long without him, we that have sinned so much against him, we that to this day are strangers to him, yea, in arms against him; is there any hope that we
white-

white-headed sinners, who have withstood so many thousand offers of Grace, and so many thousand motions of the Spirit, and so many thousand checks of Conscience, and so many thousand tenders of Christ and Heaven, that ever we should obtain Mercy, that ever we should have our old hearts turned, our millions of sins pardoned, our vile natures changed, and our poor souls saved?

I answer, that there is hope even for such as you are; all the Angels in Heaven, and all the men on earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you, may obtain mercy and favour, that your souls dye not; with the Lord nothing is impossible, and for the grace of the Gospel nothing is too hard: Now this I make evident by an induction of particulars. Thus,

Mat. 20. 1.
to 17. The
Roman
Penny was
seven
pence
half-pen-
ny.

First, All were not called nor sent to work in the Vineyard at the first hour, some were called at the third hour, others at the sixth, others at the ninth, and some at the eleventh; God hath his several times of

of calling souls to himself: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-set, when it was even time to leave work; and yet at this hour some were called, imployed, and rewarded with the rest.

Some of the Fathers, by the several hours mentioned in this Parable, do understand the several Ages of man, viz. child-hood, youth, middle-age, and old-age, wherein poor souls are called and converted to Christ; the scope of the Parable, is to signify the free Grace of God, in the calling of some in the spring and morning of their days, and in the calling of others in their old-age, and in the evening of their days. But,

Secondly, *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old age, when there were but a few steps between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity.

I have read of one *Cajus Nevarius*
Victo-

Gen. 12. 4.
Joh. 3. 1, 2,
3, 4. ch. 7.
50.

Victorius, who was an Old Man three hundred years after the Apostles time, and had been a Pagan all his days, and in his old age he enquired and hearkened after Christ, and said he would be a Christian. *Simplicianus* hearing him say so, would not believe him, but when the Church saw a work of Grace indeed upon him, there was shouting and dancing for gladness, and Psalms were sung in every Church, *Cajus Nearius Victorinus* is become a Christian; And this was written for a wonder, that he in his old age, and in his gray-hairs, should become a gracious Christian.

Aretius also speaks of a certain man in his time, it is no feigned story, saith he, for I saw the man with my own eyes, he was one that had been a most vile and desperate sinner, a drunkard, a swearer, a wanton, a gamester, and so he continued to his gray hairs; but at last it pleased God to set his sins in order before him, and the
man

man, was so troubled in Conscience, that he threw himself down unto the ground, calling upon Saran to take him away, provoking Saran to take him away; Devil, take thine own, Devil, take thine own; I am thine own, take thy own; whereupon (saith *A-etius*) prayer was made for him, Christians prayed, they fasted and prayed, they prayed night and day; and it pleased God at last, that this poor aged Sinner revived, converted to God, lived a godly life afterwards, and dyed comfortably.

Therefore let not the gray-headed sinner despair, though his Spring be past, his Summer overpast, and he arrived at the fall of the leaf. But,

Thirdly, Divine Promises shall be made good to returning Souls, to repenting souls, to believing souls, be they young or old, 2 *Chro.* 30.9. *The Lord your God is gracious & merciful, & will not turn away his face from you, if you return unto him,* Joel 2. 13. *And rent your hearts, and*

not

Isa. 1. 18.
Jer. 3. 12.
Isa. 43. 22,
to 26. ch.
57. 17, 18.
Jer. 31. 5.
Joh. 3. 16.
Mat. 16. 16

not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Isa. 55. 7.* Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, & he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon. More of this you may see by reading of the Scriptures in the Margent: all sorts of sin shall be pardoned to all sorts of believing and repenting sinners.

The *New Jerusalem* hath twelve Gates, to shew that there is every way access for all sorts and ranks of sinners, to come to Christ. He was born in an Inn, to shew that he receives all comers, Young and Old, Poor and Ric^y, &c. But,

Fourthly, The Lord hath declared by oath a greater delight in the conversion and salvation of poor sinners (whether they are young or old) than in the destruction and damnation of such, *Ezek. 33. 11.*

As

As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live : Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye dye ? O ye house of Israel ! Two things make a thing more credible.

1. The quality or dignity of the person speaking.

2. The manner of the speech : now here you have the great God, not only speaking, promising, but solemnly swearing that he had rather poor sinners should live, than dye ; be happy, than miserable ; therefore despair not, O Aged sinner ! but return unto the Lord, and thou shalt be happy for ever. But,

Fifthly, There is vertue enough in the precious blood of Jesus Christ to wash and cleanse away all sin ; not only to cleanse away the young mans sins, but also to cleanse away the old mans sins ; not only to cleanse a sinner of twenty years old, but to cleanse a sinner of sixty, sixty, yea, a hundred years old,

I John

Una guttula plus valet quam cælum & terra, Luther One little drop is more worth than Heaven and Earth.

1 *Joh. 1. 17.* The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin: not simply from sin, but from all sin; there is such a power and efficacy in the blood of Christ, as is sufficient to cleanse all sorts of sinners, from all sorts of sins; there is virtue in the blood of the Lamb to wash out all the spots that are in the oldest sinners hearts; and therefore let not old sinners despair, let not them say, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountain, the Blood of Jesus Christ is open, for all sorts of sinners to wash in. But,

Sixthly, The call and invitations of Christ in the Gospel are general and indefinite, excluding no sort of sinners, *Rev. 3. 20.* Behold, I stand at the door, and knock, if any man (mark the indefiniteness of personal admittance) hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me. Let the sinner be old or young; a green-head, or a gray-head, if he will but open the door, Christ

Christ will come in, and have communion and fellowship with him. So in that *Mat. 11. 28.* turn to these Scriptures, and dwell upon them, they all clearly evidence the Call and gracious Invitations of Christ to be to all sinners, to every sinner; he excepts not a man, no, though never so old, nothing shall hinder the sinner, any sinner, the worst and most aged sinner from obtaining mercy, if he be willing to open to Christ, and to receive him as his Lord and King, *Joh. 6. 37.* But,

Seventhly, Christ's Pathetical lamentation over all sorts and ranks of sinners, declares his willingness to shew mercy to them; O *Jerusalem, Jerusalem* (saith Christ, weeping over it) *that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, &c.* O that my people had hearkened unto me! Christ weeps over *Jerusalem*, so did *Titus*, and so did *Marcellus* over *Syracuse*, and so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*; but (they shed tears for them, whose blood they

Isa. 55. 1.
Joh. 7. 37.
Rev. 22.
17.

Luke 19.
41, 42.
Psal. 81.
13.

they were to shed, but Christ weeps over the necks of those young and old sinners, who were to shed his blood. As a tender-hearted Father weeps over his rebellious Children, when neither smiles nor frowns, neither counsels nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil ways, so doth Jesus Christ over those rebellious Jews upon whom nothing would work. But,

Eightily and lastly, Though aged sinners have given Christ many thousand denials, yet he hath not taken them; but after all, and in the face of all denials, he still reinforces his suit, and continues to beseech them by his Spirit, by his Word, by his Wounds, by his Blood, by his Messengers, and by his Rebukes, to turn home to him, to embrace him, to believe in him, and to watch with him, that they may be saved eternally by him; all which bespeaks gray-headed sinners, not to despair, nor to dispute, but to repent, return, and believe, that it may go well with them

Pf. 65. 1, 2.
Rom. 10.
21.

1 Joh. 5. 2,
3.

them for ever; Consider seriously what hath been spoken, and the Lord make you wise for Eternity.

F I N I S.

Imprimatur

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